

Elementary English

A Magazine of the Language Arts

READING
•
WRITING
•
SPEAKING
•
LISTENING
•
SPELLING
•
ENGLISH USAGE
•
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
•
RADIO AND
TELEVISION
•
AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS
•
POETRY
•
CREATIVE
WRITING

A Special Issue on Television

Patrick D. Hazard, Special Editor



From Palazzo's Bianco and the New World

(See Books for Children Section)

*Organ of the National Council
of Teachers of English*

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DECEMBER, 1957

No. 8

Special Editor's Introduction

Commercial TV and the Classroom

It has become a pious cliché in broadcasting circles to discount charges of excessive violence and cumulative mediocrity as the neurotic bleatings of "uplifters" and "do-gooders." With his uncanny nose for hokum and his shrewd debater's ear for a satiric sally, Gilbert Seldes has recently asked rhetorically in the *Saturday Review* (August 24, 1957, p. 26)—well do we believe, then, in "do-badders" and "downgraders"? It would seem so if we denigrate groups such as the American Council for Better Broadcasts (423 N. Pinckney, Madison, Wisc.) or the National Association for Better Radio and Television (882 Victoria Avenue, Los Angeles 5, California), groups that sense a threat to our Jeffersonian heritage that democracy is a great experiment in excellence. They see this threat in the unending exposure of young viewers to the meretricious and inane, to the uninspiring ratio of trashy shows to the excellent "Disneyland," "Captain Kangaroo," and "Mr. Wizard."



Patrick D. Hazard

There is no objection to broadcasters' rejecting particular findings of these viewer organizations, but to pooh-pooh the whole concept of monitoring as the work of busy-bodies (as in a *Broadcasting-Telecasting* editorial last school year) is arrogant and presumptuous. The viewer's groups, on the other hand, have the opportunity, if not the obligation, to make their judgments as sophisticated as possible by enlisting the support and direction of outstanding social scientists and humanists. And they might undertake the more practical objective of building audiences for good shows and good critics in their localities.

It may be that their resources are not commensurate with the elaborate media analyses they launch annually. But whatever projects these groups freely undertake as their democratic prerogative, they deserve our admiration and attention when they call a dirty spade dirty. After all, it doesn't take a Ph.D. in sociology to recognize the superficial and unchallenging (only motivation researchers need to be that well-

trained!) This is not to discourage the members of viewing groups from grounding themselves in the social sciences and humanities; it is just to insist that their basic intuition (that the mass media are slowing down our development as an industrial civilization) is fundamentally sound.

The struggle to humanize the mass media will be a long and difficult one, and the sooner we start the better. The most reassuring news for teachers who have fought this important fight singly for over a generation is that the National Education Association has secured the services of a knowledgeable TV craftsman to organize teacher support of good programs. Richard Krolik, ex-NBC-TV producer of "Today," explains his new program in the first article. Teachers (and parents through teachers) should realize that there are many thoughtful, idealistic, imaginative people in broadcasting who share our high standards—and are in a position to do something about them. Stockton Helffrich, continuity acceptance director ("censor" in less euphemistic terms), is such a person, and his remarks on good taste and artistic integrity deserve to be read by all those who would throw away the baby of maturity with the dirty bath water of some sleazy mass communication. Teachers might also take a fresh look (a post-Bert-and-Harry-Piel look) at advertising. Dr. John Sternig's experience with the Tatham-Laird advertising agency in the preparation of Sugar-Jet commercials for "Mickey Mouse Club" is heartening. We need to encourage good commercials ("good" in the sense that they treat the

viewer as a person capable of growth rather than as an animal to be suckered into consumership). Finally, we have to put our good intentions and our new knowledge to work in our own mass media—schools, libraries and related institutions—to exert significant countervailing pressure against do-adding and down-grading. Marie V. Hurley's description of what some imaginative librarians are doing about TV will give teachers and librarians ideas of their own, to fit the special needs and conditions of their localities. She, by the way, writes this article as a member of the Woman's National Book Association, whose monthly book lists in "Windows on the World" in *Elementary English* continue, under the direction of Iris Vinton (Chairman, Children's Programs Director, Publications Service, Boys' Clubs of America), relates the world of print to the newer popular media.

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Preparing the Columbus of 1992

The space man of the coming generation is alive today. He is a child in a home somewhere today, just as Christopher Columbus was alive in 1457 many years before his historic trip in 1492. And just as the parents and friends of Columbus had no way of knowing what he was to do when he became a man, so the adults who surround the space man of the future are generally ignorant of the kind of world he will live in.

What is being done to prepare the child of 1957 for the space age of 1992 which will surely be a reality on the 500th anniversary of the famous expedition to the new world? What are the parents and teachers doing to prepare the children who are in our homes and schools today for the kind of world they will live in?

It seems to be a sad fact that in most homes, life is lived just for today and in most schools the curriculum is likely to be fixed more by the historical events of the past than by the probabilities of the future. Where then does the citizen of tomorrow get his training for the future? To be sure the home life of an American youngster does give him the general background for what he needs as an adult, and the curriculum of the modern school is intended to achieve this same purpose. But what about the specifics?

Where, for example, does a child of 1957 get the factual data for the space age of 1977? He may get some of it from current news stories about the International Geophysical Year.* He may get some from the magazines, the movies, or

TV programs which present current events of future significance. But he is more likely to get his ideas and certainly his attitudes from science fiction comics, stories, movies, or TV shows. These can hardly be considered sound educational fare. They may entertain and they do educate, but in so doing present a strange mixture of fiction, semi-fiction, truth and semi-truth. The young person is seldom qualified to sort these out and the average parent or teacher is too often out of touch with the child's free time world to be much help in doing the job of sifting fact from fiction.

As a result, the average child today is more ready emotionally for the space age than the adults are, but factually, he has little which he can really depend on. This situation impressed the author of this article with the need for doing something about it. As a science educator and a school administrator, he has spent many years in giving children first hand contact with the facts of science which should help them to become science educated adults in the years ahead. But as a teacher he felt the continuous frustration of knowing that he could deal only with a few dozen children at a time in any first hand way. There are just not enough years for one teacher or one school system to prepare an entire generation for the kind of world it will live in.

*Editor's Note: One of the NBC-ETV programs (starting October 29) will be on IGY. See "Listenables and Lookables" for weekly listings (in *Scholastic Teacher*).

Mr. Sternig is Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Glencoe, Illinois. This article was prepared in cooperation with Miss Mary Afflick.

This educator looked with considerable interest at TV as a medium of communication with many children. Here was a medium which reached millions at one time, not just a classroom of children. Correctly conceived and executed, it could present factual material which was marvelously dramatic, appealing and truthfully informative. It had all the potential which the classroom teacher dreams about. Granted that for every educationally and dramatically sound program there were dozens which were sheer waste of time, but the potential was still there.

The educational stations which had items of value too often lacked the showmanship needed to capture an audience. A captive audience in classroom is one thing, an audience free to turn the switch was something else again. And often the switch turned to the commercial entertainment with its product sponsor. Here is the mass audience as TV now stands. Here is where the educator looks with envy. What an opportunity to reach the minds of millions!

An advertising agency, in the interests of its client, has the prime responsibility to sell his product. But the modern agency, we've found, takes very seriously its responsibility as a leader in the formation of our country's manners and mores. Among agency executives who spend much of their time and effort in the interest of social and educational betterment is Arthur E. Tatham of Tatham-Laird, Inc. Mr. Tatham was acquainted with the author's science work and with the keen interest children showed for it. He was looking for a way to tie advertising interests to something more fundamental than the gadgets and gimmicks appeal which . . . dominates in the cereal market.

Cereal advertising was all in the same "box top" and "free prize" rut. The premiums and prizes were nothing but toys in most cases and the advertising featured nothing significant beyond the appeal to the buyer.

As a man interested in education and the drama of science, Mr. Tatham discussed his idea with this writer, who reacted at once. Here was a chance to use the appeal of science and tie it into a mass medium of communication. If gadgets and gimmicks sold cereals, why shouldn't rockets and space travel?

And so began a project which has since resulted in a full scale promotion which is as novel in advertising as it is in education. The author, as a professional educator, was retained by General Mills as a consultant for the purpose of developing promotional ideas which were educationally sound in themselves and at the same time carried the emotional appeal currently needed to command the attention of the mass audience.

Concurrently, a team of writers, merchandisers, and account personnel at the agency were working out a way to utilize the "outer space" theme in a campaign for General Mills' "Sugar Jets." A product analogy was found in the three components of the cereal, sugar, wheat, and oats, with the three stage rocket progression, which is the current device for space flights.

But the real novelty of the whole campaign from the advertising viewpoint lay in the bold recommendation to make everything *education-centered* rather than *product-centered*. A series of TV commercials were planned and written which were capsule installment stories of the de-

velopment of rockets and space travel. A full minute of the 90 seconds was a science factual episode which told in a series the whole story, starting with the earth satellite program of the current IGY studies and ending with space travel of the future.

For the filming of these commercials, the agency selected a Hollywood production company whose personnel included two men who had won academy awards in factual space travel filming. The author served as technical advisor and foremost experts in rockets and space travel were used as consultants. What resulted is a true novelty—a series of commercials which are scientifically sound and dramatically appealing. They tell a story which needs telling—the story of the space age into which the youngsters who watch the show are growing. The commercials are presented on the Mickey Mouse Club, which commands the attention of the nation's children and the respect of the nation's adults. It is a series of commercials which need no apology. They are factually sound and should do a good deal toward directing the attention of the children of today toward the world in which they will live as adults. If they also help to sell a product, it will provide economic justification for further efforts to place advertising

on a higher plane than it has generally chosen in the past.

Combined with the use of television to reach the nation's children is a box top promotion involving books on space travel written by a leading authority, authentic models based on the author's teaching and TV models and a telescope with a sky map which can give children a motivation for starting astronomy study.

Thus, using the time-tested media of the advertiser combined with the ideas of an educator, a new experiment in teaching through advertising or selling while teaching is under way. If it succeeds one may hope that the way will be opened for further experiments. Educators have responsibility for working inside the media of communication rather than lamenting about them from outside. This can have values in many directions. The economic world may pay better attention to the educator and the educator may find that his own teaching will be improved by using the techniques for capturing and holding audience which the communications experts have discovered.

The Columbus of 1992 won't be prepared by the project described here but "it is better to light one small candle than to curse the darkness."

THERE WAS A LITTLE BIRD

There was a little bird
That was bathing in the sand.
He was a little brown bird,
And he had a black band.
He lived in a tree
With pink and white blossoms.
His neighbors were his friends,
And they were the 'possums.
Susan Concellosi, Grade 3
San Diego City Schools

Juvenile Kibitzers in the Television Age

Windows and Ceilings

The point has been made that television as a popular art constitutes a window on the world. And so it is, particularly for children. Let no teacher and no parent plead ignorance on the range of views it affords.

The best offerings on television are so good that they risk being taken for granted.

Festival of Music, Salome, Amahl and the Night Visitors, and Leonard Bernstein on Omnibus: superb, and in your own living room!

Man and Superman, The Fourposter, Maugham's The Letter, The Caine Mutiny Court Martial: incisive theatre, center orchestra for the whole family!

Peter Pan or Richard III, depending on your mood. Ditto Murrow's Clinton coverage or Sid Caesar's hilarious and biting satires.

Also the trenchant adaptations of William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John O'Hara. And, of course, the TV originals of the Robert Alan Arthur and Paddy Chayefsky group who earned their degrees at Fred Coe Preparatory. With such as these for exhibits, I would claim that the medium's potentials are as incredible as its successes.

There is a complication, however. Not all of this material is planned specifically for children of varying age groups. (Neither for that matter are a legion of books on home and library shelves, a mass of motion pictures in distribution, and no end of legitimate stage offerings in the big

metropolitan areas or on the road.) Television, like radio, has a peculiar problem in regard to children. Why?

Local programs aside, TV's coast-to-coast network offerings cross time zones. Material of essential interest to adults at 10:00 P.M., EST in New York may be hitting the full family circle near dinner time in some such place as San Bernadino. It is certainly not the broadcaster's contention that there is something dreadful in this; it *is* sometimes the contention of groups advocating more segmentizing (upgrading is what most of them call it) of the medium's program schedule.

From my point of view, in a job preoccupied with the broadcaster's editorial responsibilities towards his audience, the time zone problem is a key to any evaluation of the alleged and the real effects of television on its audience. No matter what a network broadcasts and no matter when, the audience composition could range from moppets to grandparents. In sociological terms this introduces into American life some intriguing complexities.

There seems to be very little contention left anywhere that the phenomenon of television has not materially altered our lives. Certainly the generation of youngsters who have grown up with it will show qualitative differences compared with those in older generations. Any number of writers, pro and con, who have touched upon this area before me, are convinced of the medium's ability to influence children,

Mr. Helffrich is Director of Continuity Acceptance at NBC.

and they stress the tremendous responsibility of the broadcaster. (Some qualify this: responsibility the broadcaster and parents share).

*TV Editors at Work in Step
With the Times*

In clear conscience I can say an office like mine does everything it possibly can to live up to its responsibilities. Editors working with me in our various offices around the country expend their energy policing an output along lines that might surprise many outside the industry. Examples are in order:

As editors of material aimed at a family audience, we naturally devote our attention to such obvious matters as borderline costuming or blue innuendo. We are not Comstocks, and we do recognize that moral indignations have a tendency to get carried away with themselves, and so we include as imperative in our work a pinch of the salt of common sense. That is, while we question costuming or material too obviously breezy, we reject the attitude reflected in the objection of one mother (to an observation by Miss Frances) that a goldfish shown in a bowl was due to have baby goldfish. Some of the "facts of life" may be too much for mop-pets, but surely not that one.

We concern ourselves with too glib a use of cocktails and alcohol as props for brittle drawing-room comedies, but we would scarcely argue that character-delineating uses of alcohol should be eliminated from a television adaptation of *The Lost Weekend*.

We bow to indigenous humane attitudes by avoiding animal acts which might encourage cruelty to animals. But we stand

firmly against organized pressure when material about Spain gives incidental recognition to the Spaniard's love for bull-fighting.

We frown on excess violence proposed in a script or present in motion picture film shown on TV. Some of those old and ever-popular westerns did indeed indulge in the most prolonged bits of mayhem! In cutting down on the length, and on the degree of this, we do not go so far as to suggest that conflict never spills over into violence. Conflict so very definitely *does* exist all around us that it seems unrealistic in the extreme to suggest we allow no reflection of it within reasonable bounds.

We are sensitive to the realities of mental illness, and we are extremely cautious in the use of words like "crazy" when script writers really mean absurd or foolish or silly. Our position in this area is in fact overt and uncompromising.

A few years ago we received a proposal for a comedy series which would have opened each week at the gates of a mental hospital. The camera was to dolly through these gates, cross the lawns and look upon the supposedly comic cavortings of the patients. Do I need to say that we found this proposal completely unacceptable?

We have also been busy eliminating racial stereotypes from the films and cartoons that were a Saturday afternoon staple for my generation. We cut completely such things as Little Farina blanching ashen white with fear or a derbied peddler caricatured along anti-Semitic lines.

Also cut are elements contributing to superstition, lending credence to astrology, or supporting a variety of items frowned on by modern educators.

Free Art, Competition, and "Safe Bets"

These editorial actions are obvious or not, depending on one's closeness to the television business. People who declare themselves as against censorship will usually concede that such excisions constitute a "necessary evil" and do boil down to sensible umpiring. On the other hand, those who fear censorship are anxious lest we go beyond mere umpiring and impose arbitrary limitations on some of the wider issues which challenge television playwrights and others.

In the round, it seems to me that there are enough checks and balances to militate against abuse of editorial power. One factor working for general freedom of expression is that the TV medium is a highly competitive one. The networks compete not only with each other but with the film industry, book and magazine publishing, and the legitimate stage.

Every now and then a sponsor of a well-known showcase series, eager for public good will, will turn thumbs down on a controversial theme. Sometimes networks move in that direction. Usually competitive pressures swing either or both back. You just can't hold an audience, be you network or sponsor, unless you include genuine diversity in your program schedule, unless you take some calculated risks, unless you displease some while pleasing others.

From where I sit I can see where the pressures towards uniformity and conformity come from. I daresay the reader suspects where they come from without any name-dropping on my part. There are always people, as individuals or as organized groups, who are prepared to pressure any art form away from the truth as others

may see it. The pressure groups are all in favor of censorship, especially when it is *their* form of censorship. What they are saying in effect is: "It is our morality which is the true morality, or it is our philosophy which is the true philosophy, or it is our position which must prevail as the common denominator for the majority."

This, of course, is challenged by mature people. But mature people do not always prevail in our troubled world. Every now and then my colleagues and I find ourselves hard-pressed to maintain our position, even though we claim to be nothing more than arbiters of taste and common sense. Ours is a position within the democratic tradition, and we feel we dare not reach beyond it. We reject whatever we recognize as concentrated malice; we do not tamper with an honest challenge, whether we agree with it or not.

Happily truth does out, though it may take time. Readers of *Elementary English* will feel a kinship in this regard with quiz champion Charles Van Doren. When he explained earlier this year on NBC's "Home" show "Why I am a Teacher," he based his position on his interest in the truth. He said, "The truth never changes, and everything else does."

"Good" and "Bad" Censorship; Accent the Positive

Besides being against certain things, television editors must also stand up *for* something.

Some time ago we decided it was not enough to eliminate racial stereotypes. We felt we should create an atmosphere in which producers and directors could introduce some positive elements on racial relations. It is so easy, really, to hire actors

whose racial derivation is apparent. At NBC we call it "Integration Without Identification" and hope that viewers have noticed roles ranging from taxi-drivers to newspapermen, from doctors to social workers, played by competent Negro actors or actors of other racial minority derivation.

Along with our rejection of vulgarity, of cheap attitudes on mental and emotional illness, and other excesses we began to move in on the more extreme slapstick treatment of adults—say parents and teachers. But what was a logical replacement? One that a great many of you must be acquainted with is "Father Knows Best." In this series father is not infallible but neither is he a first-class boob. The situations show humor, but they also show adults with human fallibilities working themselves out of their difficulties with realistic and intelligent solutions.

NBC enjoys the confidence of the Child Welfare League because we consult with the League on scripts involving foster parents, black markets in babies, adoptions, and the like. We have a similar arrangement with the American Psychiatric Association, the American Medical Association, and others who have offered consultative service any time their areas are touched upon. We are developing, but have not yet formalized, an arrangement with the National Social Welfare Assembly, an affiliation of more than five dozen different social agencies.

Parent-Teacher Approaches to Television

Television broadcasters are showing a considerable degree of editorial care. Parents and teachers in turn must search out

the best television has to offer and confidently exploit it for the good of young people. In doing so, both parents and teachers must allow for *some* calculated risks. The medium is a complicated one and cannot be expected to reduce everything to a safe, always perfect-for-children level. *Most* of it will be and, where responsible broadcasters are concerned, the aim always will be in that direction. But let's not pretend that a network can slice up the broadcast day into sections neatly labeled as suitable for adults or sections neatly labeled for children. This is suggesting the impossible and it works from the false premise that the whole responsibility is the broadcaster's.

Parents, too, have their responsibilities—for eating habits, bedtimes, reading, playmates, movie-going. Does such parental responsibility stop when that alleged TV monster looms into view? Come now, let's be reasonable.

When is Reality Too Real for Children?

Some parents and some educators fear certain aspects of life reflected in television may be in bad taste where younger viewers are exposed to them *inadvertently*. Patrick D. Hazard, *Elementary English* television editor, feels with me that, to the contrary, good taste in the truest sense exists at many levels of maturity. Good taste has to be judged in a context, and has to be evaluated in terms of total intent. If material done in good taste for adults happens to snare young viewers, then what?

When Leslie in Somerset Maugham's *The Letter* said she shot a man because he tried to rape her, wasn't the word "rape" correct and proper in context?

What about Paddy Chayefsky's *The Catered Affair* in which a neighbor maliciously suggests that the reason a marriage is being rushed is because the daughter may be "in trouble?" This particular wording is of tremendous importance in establishing the tensions which build to a dramatic impasse in this fine play. Does the phrase have the same connotation for all ages of viewers? Suppose some young viewers *did* wonder about that phrase's exact meaning. Couldn't adults answer *as far as their children* ask and no further? They certainly would be following the recommendations of most specialists who make a study of the needs and the handling of children. They certainly would want to do so if they are interested in the standards by which their children will live.

The more overt words in a context of good taste and good artistic intent on television mean no more (mean actually less) where young viewers are concerned than the words these same youngsters can find in screaming headlines, in overheard conversations, and in other daily exposures. Dirt for dirt's sake, anywhere, is abhorrent; honesty isn't, ever.

The plain truth is that the mature use of the word "rape," the good framework for a reference to a girl "in trouble," do no more than expose young people to some of the many problems adults face and young-adults in their turn will have to

face. Further, these adult problems, occurring sporadically in television, constitute some made-to-order *parental opportunities* the adults of my generation never enjoyed. The *accidental* kibitzing of children on maturely edited television programs aimed at adults is acceptable *if the television diet of those children is reasonably supervised at home.*

If the television diet of children is given average supervision by parents, and some direction by educators, the responsible editing by broadcasters need not and should not extend farther than it presently is practiced. To do so, for children, would be to risk retarding maturity and the whole growing up process; to do so, for adults, would reduce television as an art form to childish levels.

All well and good; the test of any pudding is in the eating and in sufficient appetite for what has been prepared. Meat and potatoes, caviar too, are on the menu.

Those of us who are trying to be honest about our editorial responsibilities are able to face up to the criticism of our bad or arbitrary or immature judgments. We need support, however, for the courage of our industry's good convictions. Parents and teachers owe it to themselves and to their charges to support the best of television fare and to defend it against unqualified and backward criticism.

MARIE V. HURLEY

TV, Johnny, and Reading

"You like to watch television? . . . When the program is over, you need not be sorry. You can go to the Library and borrow books about the same things you

have been seeing." These lines from the *Miss Hurley* is Corresponding Secretary, Women's National Book Association, and Assistant Librarian, The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Connecticut.

"TV Guide to Books" compiled by the Children's Librarians of the New York Public Library for the summer of 1955 is a reaffirmation of librarians' faith in the printed word, as well as their recognition of a new medium of communication as a road to books and reading. The book, with its permanency, accessibility, and movability is here to stay. So is television, with its exciting new ways of presenting ideas. And librarians have been learning how to use the new to promote the old.

It was not always so. Less than ten years ago librarians were worrying about what this new gadget would do to their customers. Surveys were being made to prove that it was, or was not, responsible for lower book circulation. Even those with faith in their own wares looked down their noses at what they considered a monster and refused to give it house room.

All that is changed now. Libraries are busier than ever, and librarians find themselves hard put to it to supply the material demanded by TV viewers whose minds have been stretched and whose interests have been broadened as all sorts of new worlds have invaded their homes. For it was soon discovered that television didn't stop the real readers from reading—except temporarily when their sets were new. Furthermore, it brought non-readers to the library asking for a book which they had seen dramatized or discussed, or a book on some subject in which their interest had been aroused by an informative program.

This has been found to be particularly true of children. As Eula P. Mohle says in an article in *Scholastic Teacher*, March 15, 1956, "... the largest and most enthusiastic group of those who turn to books in the wake of televising is of elementary

and junior high age." "Many readers spend less time reading, but it is possible for their reading to be both broader and deeper as a result of Tying." This statement is reinforced by the Stamford, Connecticut, Community Council. It was found that from junior high school years to the senior year in high school, watching television drops steadily as a favorite recreation.

It is the children of elementary school age, therefore, who offer the greatest opportunity to librarians wishing to make use of the vital interest stimulated by popular commercial television programs to bring books and readers together. To make the most of this opportunity librarians in elementary schools and children's departments of public libraries are preparing booklists, displays, and book exhibits; planning TV inspired programs and other activities; and, in a spirit of preparedness, are following TV schedules and even watching programs themselves. This article is a description of some of these library-centered activities as observed either in the library in which the author is employed, or gleaned from correspondence or conversation with a handful of librarians. Hundreds of similar projects are undoubtedly being carried on all over the country, but the librarians must be too busy doing to write about them, as there is almost nothing on the subject in professional periodical literature. A great deal can be found about library sponsored and conducted television programs, but that is beyond the scope of this article.

All of the librarians contacted report constant demand for books as a result of television programs. They mentioned such specific titles as *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Treasure*

Island, Huckleberry Finn, Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan, and Robin Hood. Equally important is the demand for books on science, nature, current events, and famous people inspired by continuing programs such as "Zoo Parade," "Mr. Wizard," "Wide, Wide World," or "You are There." Capitalizing on the interest aroused in these programs, librarians have attempted to reach the non-reader and the poor reader, and to broaden still further the horizons of the good reader.

Printed or mimeographed booklists are one means of accomplishing this. A very attractive and comprehensive one is the one issued by The New York Public Library. It lists daily, Saturday and Sunday, and Monday through Friday programs in three separate sections, with time and channel information. Two books are listed for each program and they vary all the way from Lenski's *Cowboy Small*, for Howdy Doody fans, to Hale's *Peterkin Papers*, for those old enough and sophisticated enough to be able to sit up and watch Burns and Allen. An introduction points out that this is only a listing of some programs and a few books, but "You name your program—the Librarian will name a book! Try her!" Booklists are expensive and ephemeral, but they have their advantages. They can be put into the fists of visiting classes, or taken outside of school and library buildings and distributed to community groups. If a school has good mimeographing facilities, simple but attractive lists are not an impossibility.

Displays of books are another way of calling attention to books related to TV programs. A school librarian in Thurmont, Maryland, in preparation for such programs as *Treasure Island* or *Tom Sawyer*,

displays as many copies of the books as she can buy, beg, or borrow. The display is illustrated by cutout figures of the book characters made by student assistants. This librarian also reads from these books to visiting classes, sometimes finishing a book in serial form, from week to week. *Robin Hood* was especially popular when done in this way.

A display worked out for the adult section of The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Connecticut, could be adapted to a children's library. It is a simple square board with the caption "Books Add to TV Pleasure." There is a place on it for three placards shaped like a TV screen. These give information on outstanding programs—name, time, channel, stars, etc. These are made up and changed as often as the programs change. The board is mounted over a small bookcase which holds books related to the programs. The effectiveness of the display is in the use of colored papers and lettering. Program notes and books are usually left for a week or more after the program appears, as that is when most reader interest is shown.

These booklists and displays actually serve a dual purpose. They advertise not only books, but call attention to the better TV programs. And most librarians have accepted TV, along with films and phonograph records, as another very effective means of communication and entertainment. It is worthy of the library's attention above and beyond the fact that it helps promote books, our chief stock in trade.

Recognition of the value of these modern media of communication is shown in the wedding of books and films in a series of TV inspired programs planned by Mrs. Helen Prange, Director of the Chil-

dren's Department of The Ferguson Library, Stamford, Conn. The public library of Stamford is responsible for the libraries in fifteen elementary and one junior high school. Each year, Mrs. Prange, herself, visits these schools two or three times with special programs. This year, being very aware of the interest in snakes, animals, and insects, generated by such programs as *Wide, Wide World*, *Odyssey*, and *Zoo Parade*, she took as her theme "Drama in the Nature World." "Beneath Our Feet" in the Battle of Life Series produced under the sponsorship of Sears, Roebuck, was chosen as the film. Mary Adrian, a writer of naturebooks who lives nearby was the guest speaker. In addition Mrs. Prange talked about such books as *First Book of Snakes*, by J. L. Hoke, *See through the Sea*, by Millicent Selsam, *At the Water's Edge*, by Terry Shannon, and *Insects in Their World*, by Suzan Noguchi Swain. This program was also given in the library for several Cub Scout groups.

A second TV inspired program, "Heads Up for Beauty," was presented to girls in the junior high school and to parochial school eighth graders in the library. The purpose of the program was to make girls realize that good grooming plays an important part in growing up. The title came from the Toni sponsored film which was used, but the idea for the program came from Robert Young's "Father Knows Best." The girls' stories and books on grooming and personality which were used for the book talk are still on reserve at the library. Other TV programs which have given Mrs. Prange material for programs are "Disneyland" and "Robin Hood," "West Point," to introduce Landmark books, and *Jim Bowie* and

Wyatt Earp to introduce slow and non-readers to some of the very simple Childhood of Famous Americans Series such as Daniel Boone, David Crockett, and Custer.

If librarians and teachers have any misgivings about trying to compete with television shows in this way they may be heartened by a comment passed along to Mrs. Prange by a teacher. After one of the "Drama in the Nature World" programs, a Greek boy, newly arrived in this country, told his interpreter, "Gee, this is better than a TV show."

There are many other ways in which interest inspired by television can be put to work in the library. Some of the programs suggest themes for summer reading programs, as *Davy Crockett* did for the Enoch Pratt Free Library a couple of summers ago. Davy himself was not emphasized, but a wide range of books on other American trailblazers and pioneers was pointed up. Libraries, both school and public, have also gone outside their own walls to cooperate with local TV programs, supplying book lists and other book information. This ranges all the way from the New York Public Library's suggestions which Dave Garroway uses on "Today" to Kern City, California, where a weather forecaster used children's books on weather to tie-in with library week, and sportscasters used new sports books as springboards. Or television can be brought into the library by using TV panel and quiz programs as patterns for library book clubs or classroom programs. Television personnel and personalities can be invited to talk in the school. Discussion of television standards and techniques, or presentation of books and plays make good library club or class activities.

The possibilities are endless, especially when one looks at the programs promised for the Fall. NBC is presenting Shirley Temple in a series of tales including *Pi-nocchio*, *Pied Piper*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, and *Robinson Crusoe*. As though that weren't enough, four of Shirley's old book-inspired films, *Captain January*, *Wee Willie Winkle*, *Heidi*, and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* will be shown. *Hans Brinker* will be one of the "Hallmark Hall of Fame" shows. Two different versions of *Hansel and Gretel* are in the works. *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Aladdin* will be in the Dupont monthly series on CBS. As for information programs, "Wide, Wide World" will be back with a new program on which subject matter from different parts of the country will be treated with more depth than formerly; Lowell Thomas will have a series of hour-long films on places from Borneo to the North Pole; a series on science entitled "Conquest" is being planned; and Disneyland will have a film based on the launching of the earth satellite.

All of this presents a great challenge to librarians and teachers. First of all it is essential to know the exact scheduling of the programs. This takes an eagle eye and constant alertness. The best weekly listing of programs useful to schools is "Listensables and Lookables" edited by Patrick Hazard in *Scholastic Teacher*, a supplement to *Senior Scholastic*. This also lists a few programs more than a week in ad-

vance, but for really long range planning, the television pages of the Sunday papers, *TV Guide*, and other sources have to be watched. Student help might be enlisted for this.

When the timing of programs is definite, then teachers and librarians must decide how they will be utilized. Booklists, exhibits, and programs are as good as the planning and preparation which go into them. Extra copies of books must be ordered, and perhaps book jackets solicited from publishers if the original jackets are kept on the library books. Picture material must be collected for bulletin boards and displays. The television networks do not seem to be set up to supply this kind of material to schools and libraries, but good pictures do appear in magazines and newspapers. Here again student help would be valuable.

The programs are coming. What are we going to do about it? They will be good, bad, and indifferent, but that is beyond our control. In their wake, however, we can be sure that the children will be coming to us with new ideas and interests—as well as demands for old favorites their parents and grandparents used to read. This we can do something about. How well we are prepared to catch, hold, and develop this interest is entirely our responsibility. If we supply the right books, at the right time, to the right child, television and books will not only live comfortably together, but will enrich the lives of those who make full use of both.

The NEA and TV

"Commercial television is here to stay."

That statement might not appear to be earth-shattering intelligence, in view of the existence of some 40,000,000 TV sets and the investment of 1.3 billion dollars annually in the ten-year-old medium by U. S. advertisers. But when it is made by convened representatives of 700,000 educators, at the beginning of the second century of the National Education Association's life, it makes news in the television industry as well as in educational circles.

Translated into a plan of action, NEA's decision to recognize the presence and power of commercial TV means that the coming year will see an organized, planned effort on the part of the world's largest professional organization to exert an influence on the world's most influential medium of communications.

This effort will be directed toward two principal goals. One will be to secure more and better representation of our school problems on the commercial TV channels; the other will be to use the influence of the nation's educators to raise the level of general commercial programming.

These are not identical objectives, even though they will both eventually help teachers and school administrators do their jobs better. The latter aim—to upgrade general TV programming content—is largely unselfish on the part of educators, and can be classified as a very real public service to the children and parents who are spending a frightening number of hours in front of the flickering TV screen every

week of their lives.

Educators are recognizing that they cannot hope to stem this tidal wave of unblinking obedience to the one-eyed monster. That would be as unrealistic as trying to turn a young man's fancy to thoughts of syntax and sentence-parsing in the spring; it can be done, but only by associating the message with the known facts of the case. The known facts of this case are that television has invaded the American home and does command attention.

So the realistic hope is to turn that attention to worthwhile television programs—and the sad reality is that there are all too few "worthwhile" programs, in terms of adding to the viewer's general store of information and education.

But if those few programs were truly supported, by an audience that was important both qualitatively and quantitatively, not only would they be given better exposure and promotion by the networks, but there would also be more programs like them.

Educators and their allies—people with a sincere interest in our schools and our teachers—can constitute a television audience that is both qualitatively and quantitatively important. Qualitatively, because they are in a special position of influence with regard to our youth and our children, as well as within their own communities, and quantitatively because they can be added up to an impressive total.

Mr. Krolík is radio-TV representative of the National Education Association.

Begin with the one and one-half million teachers. Add to that 100,000 administrators. Reach out to take in 10 million organized members of parent-teacher groups. Add college and university alumni. Cut across professional organizations—lawyers, doctors, musicians, scientists. Accumulate a few million educated citizens who despair of the future brainpower of a generation conditioned only to Westerns and old movies.

The totals are impressive. They must be too, because television is a massive medium to move. Some of the figures indicate the necessity for a large and responsive audience: time and talent cost to an advertiser for a weekly, half-hour network program—at least \$90,000 *per show*, or about four and one-half million dollars per year. And going up.

It is readily apparent that these network programs must deliver huge audiences, if they are to justify advertisers' investments. Even "sustaining" (i.e., non-sponsored) programs must deliver some evidence of public interest, or they soon drop by the wayside. Networks have to assume that there is no point in paying for studio facilities, technicians, actors, writers, directors, cable charges, and the hundred other dollar-and-cents details, if no one is at his set watching.

Yet there is another dimension to the television audience. Mere bodies are important, but influential bodies have their place, too. If community leaders (and educators *are* community leaders) will watch certain types of programs, the networks, local stations and advertisers are well served.

According to the leaders of the broadcasting industry, the educators' support of

"quality" programming on television and radio will be welcomed with open arms. Dr. Frank Stanton, President of the Columbia Broadcasting System, writes, "NEA's interest in radio and television programming is indeed heartening. If the members of the NEA could be encouraged to familiarize themselves first-hand with the schedules of the various networks, they could be most helpful."

Mr. Leonard Goldenson, President of the American Broadcasting Company, says, "Speaking for ABC Television, and presuming to speak for television generally, I want to take this opportunity to applaud NEA for its project to raise the audience levels for 'quality' programming and thus to start in motion a cycle which must inevitably lead to higher quality programming as well as more programming of this higher caliber."

It appears that network management is sincerely desirous of creating better programs, and needs only some articulate support to broaden their base of quality programming.

What are some of the television and radio programs that NEA feels are worthy of educators' support? The list is not unimpressive, even though most of the television shows are crowded into Sunday's schedule and often compete with each other.

The so-called "newsmaking" programs are almost always fascinating, and easily recommended for students whose intellectual development parallels the particular subject being discussed. Among these, NBC-TV's veteran "Meet the Press" and CBS-TV's "Face the Nation" give a new dimension to news of the day. The sight of prominent newsmakers responding

to probing questions of trained reporters is a healthy sight and should give young people a respect for independence of thought.

High school and college students can see their contemporaries in action on ABC-TV's "College Press Conference" and NBC-TV's "Youth Wants to Know," and feel fortified in their own instincts to question and discover truth for themselves. Teachers can feel pride in youth, too, watching these programs; the forthright and intelligent questions put by young interrogators often make their adult counterparts appear over-awed and over-careful by comparison.

Current and ancient history has received important attention from television. Edward R. Murrow's "See It Now" stands out as an engrossing presentation of significant happenings and personalities of today's world. The "See It Now" reports are seen on Sunday afternoons, once each month; their subject matter is drawn from the headlines and important world stories.

The Public Affairs Department of CBS continues to make 6:30 to 7 p.m. Sundays a rewarding half-hour with a new series called "Twentieth Century." Past years have seen this half-hour occupied by "You Are There," factual and dramatic reenactments of historical incidents designed to reinforce textbook impressions, and "Air Power," a 26-week saga of the air age.

"Twentieth Century" encompasses the past, present, and future of our era; a different producer has been charged with depicting each of the three time-dimensions. Their aims are high: Burton Benjamin, producer of 18 programs dealing with the past, hopes to give

"... today's student a better understanding of the background of the complex world he lives in, and today's teacher an invaluable tool in orienting the student to his political, economic, scientific, and cultural environment."

Al Wasserman, who produced a remarkable documentary on mental health for CBS last year, will turn his talents to two "future" Twentieth Century programs, one on "brainwashing" and another on atomic energy. Stephen Fleischman, dealing with the present, tackles two subjects that should interest all educators: "juvenile delinquency" and a "study in depth of the problem of the fullest utilization of our human resources."

For the future scientists in your schoolrooms, CBS will present four special programs during the year, under the general title of "Conquest." They are planned as stimulating looks into the world of science, and the men who are making that world. "Conquest" will be seen on Sunday afternoon, too—well-advertised in advance.

Over on the channels of the National Broadcasting Company, there will be rewarding sights for the Sunday afternoon TV-viewer, too.

The most popular program, based on audience ratings of the last two years, is expected to be "Wide, Wide World." Presented every other week for 90 minutes, this all-live electronic tour of the North American continent brings into every TV-equipped living room the sights and sounds of the land we live in. In the past, "Wide, Wide World" has often performed marvels for their own sake, taking cameras to the top of Mount Washington and under the ocean; this season, the producers promise to spend less time hop-skip-and-

jumping around, and more time exploring the aspects of Americana that they scrutinize. On almost every "Wide, Wide World" show, there is some history, some sociology, and some transmission of local flavor and character that might take the viewer a lifetime to discover in person.

Alternating with "Wide, Wide World" in the same time-period on Sundays is "Omnibus," operating for the first time without benefit of a substantial financial grant from the Ford Foundation. If "Omnibus" can maintain its high standard of taste and production, it should be an outstanding program. You may recall last season's admirable series on music, conducted by Leonard Bernstein, and the programs on the American Constitution, narrated by Joseph Welch, of McCarthy-hearings fame.

NBC will go to film for several "special" programs which hold great promise. "Southeast Asia," narrated by James Michener, has been assembled from special footage obtained by NBC's camera crews on a three-months assignment in this important world area; "Dr. B" is a fascinating study of the general practitioner, filmed with the new "actuality" technique.

There will be more "Conversations with Wise Men" films on NBC this season—Prime Minister Ben Gurion of Israel, Pablo Picasso, Igor Stravinsky, William Faulkner, and others. The aim of producer Robert Graff is "... to select men and women who, by word or deed, truly built our times."

There are many worthwhile programs, offered from time to time by the networks and by local stations, which have been omitted from this "highlight" listing. But perhaps a good place to stop this discussion

of programs that should be supported is with the NBC-TV "Wisdom" series, because the frequency with which they are presented depends directly on the reception they receive by the public. The educators of America can make it easy for the commercial networks to present programs like this, simply by supporting the good shows they do present.

Teachers are not expected to become steady, uncritical television viewers or radio listeners. Perhaps some of you will find a familiar note in the attitude expressed in a recent *New York Times Book Review* column by Harvey Breit:

"Undoubtedly . . . (the popular arts) . . . corrupt taste. Worse still, they bore us to pieces. But we not only have to learn to live with them, we have to try to make them less corrupting and less boring. The fellows who are engaged in this job are the ones who deserve our encouragement and praise. There are enough of them to make the fight seem not so one-sided—for example, the people who made a television show like the interview with Pablo Casals possible."

Or, as Edward R. Murrow wrote in a television trade publication, "If television and radio are to be used to entertain all of the people all of the time, then we have come perilously close to discovering the real opiate of the people."

What of the other aim of NEA in the fields of television and radio, accurate and widespread representation of the problems and promises of our schools? We are making progress in that direction, it can be reported. If teachers will cooperate, by reporting news and feature stories from their schools, we can make much greater, and steadier, progress.

An indication of how educators and the radio-TV media can cooperate to the enrichment of both was demonstrated in early September of this year.

In cooperation with a month-long "saturation campaign" on the NBC Radio network, designed to make audiences conscious of the impending opening of our public schools, NEA was able to provide recorded messages by teachers and copy for "live" announcements by NBC radio announcers. These recorded messages and live announcements consisted of brief facts, figures, and words about our nation's schools. New "jingles," especially composed and recorded with top musical artists for "Back to School," on behalf of the National Citizens Council for the Public Schools, were used extensively.

NBC Radio estimated that approximately one-quarter of a *billion* listener-impressions were made by this campaign, which inserted the "Back to School" messages within regular network programs and as "spots."

Climax of the month-long bid for the nation's ears came on September 6-7-8, when NBC's "Monitor" made "Back to School" its editorial theme throughout the broadcast weekend. Working with members of NEA's National School Public Relations Association, NBC newsmen in cities all around the U. S. made tape-recorded reports on the "Back to School" situation in their communities.

Other network programs reported on

"Back to School" news during the first week in September, among them CBS-TV's "World News Roundup," and NBC-TV's "Today" and "Outlook."

More and more, television and radio producers will be encouraged to deal with material from the nation's schools. NEA's newly-created TV-Radio Office in New York is working with leading programs on their forthcoming shows, and the research facilities of NEA's Washington headquarters have been made available for all legitimate queries on school information.

There is a strong possibility that a regular network series, dealing with stories and features about our schools, may make its appearance before the year is out. If such a series does come into being, it will depend for its material on information provided by educators about their own schools. It is hoped that the teachers of English can cooperate in this venture.

In sum, there is great reason to hope that the problems of education will emerge as a legitimate subject for coverage in the mass-circulation media, radio and television. If, at the same time those media are devoting precious broadcast hours to publicizing education's aims and struggles, the educators can help television and radio to help themselves—by supporting the conscientious efforts to upgrade program content—there is every reason to believe that one of the more nourishing symbiotic relationships in modern communications may be under way.

Reading and Television

Learning to read by television! What an amazing thing to contemplate—particularly with all the hue and cry about the way television is destroying the reading habits of our country. Yet fifth grade boys and girls in Pittsburgh and surrounding areas are actually learning to read via this medium.

As a teacher who has participated in this program, I have been amazed at the success with which it has met in our school. I must confess I had many misgivings when I agreed to take part in this experimental program. However, I am now completely sold on its value. Our children have made good progress in reading, and, what is more important, in many of them the desire to read has been created. This is contrary to all that we have been led to believe.

In our Pittsburgh program, an expert reading teacher introduced fifth grade boys and girls to the materials in their reading textbook in a manner that was both meaningful and colorful. Through the use of puppets, mechanical contrivances, shadowboxes, and other clever inventions, Miss Nardoza made interesting and exciting even the drill exercises which might otherwise seem very humdrum. When the children saw *Early Bird*, *Snooper*, or *Dick Dictionary*, they knew they were in for some type of drill, so they immediately picked up their pencils and were ready to go.

The motivation of the stories in each unit was done in a way that would be almost impossible in an ordinary classroom

situation. For example, the children met many people who were outstanding in their particular fields of endeavor. These people could not have spared the time to visit all the classrooms which were a part of this experiment, but through television all of them were reached. Robert Frost made poetry a living thing to the boys and girls, yet few of them would ever have had the chance to see and hear this famous author had they not been a part of a television demonstration group. A naturalist introduced the boys and girls to the wonders of nature, and created in many of them the desire to take advantage of the nature program put on in our city parks. A Pittsburgh artist brought to the students different types of art through real paintings done by outstanding artists. This lesson was presented in conjunction with the story of Audubon, and the children could see the contrast between the realism of this painter and the impressionism of others.

In addition, the children were introduced to a lieutenant in the United States Army, a graduate of West Point. They were thrilled to meet a real "West Pointer" and learn from him that many of the Academy traditions have changed little since the time of Robert E. Lee, whose story they had read. A pilot of a modern plane explained his equipment and demonstrated its use. A local newspaperman showed them the difference between a modern big city daily and the paper edited

Miss Jones is a teacher in the Pittsburgh public schools.

by Benjamin Franklin. These and numerous other guests made more meaningful the things about which the students were reading.

As a classroom teacher, I found it easy to present the follow-up material because the children were intensely interested. They were eager to read the stories to find out more about the things to which they had been introduced. They did many things to supplement the assigned material on their own initiative. I was especially pleased with the reaction of a girl who said she hated reading. She was put into the demonstration group in the hope that this attitude might be changed. It was! At the end of the year, Rosalind's reading level had not increased tremendously, but she would now pick up a book without being urged and attempt to read it. She was constantly bringing in pictures or things she had made at home to fit in with our lessons. With Rosalind this was unheard of. Because of this change in attitude, I believe Rosalind will begin to make

the progress we can expect of one of her ability.

Through the use of standard tests, we found that these children made at least as much progress as children taught in the ordinary way. However, I believe that the value of television teaching lies not so much in the skills development that can be measured by tests as in the enrichment it brings to the reading program. Children taught by this method have profited from numerous experiences not possible in any other situation.

As a result of this experiment I am convinced that television and the classroom teacher must work together. Television is a very important educational tool, but it will never replace the teacher in the classroom. The things presented on television must be followed up by a trained teacher. Only such a teacher can cope with the individual differences that exist in any class; only he can clarify matters on which confusion may arise. Working as a team, television and the classroom teacher will continue to teach children to read.

TO MY MOTHER

Oh, Mother! won't you rest a while?
You're as busy as a bee.
You only sleep at ten o'clock,
And wake up so early, as if you're a cock.
Oh, Mother! won't you come to play?
You work and work and work all day.
And when with guests you're forced to sit,
With your two hands you begin to knit.
Oh, Mother! are you made of gold?
You never fall ill or catch a cold.
Were you ever a child like me,
Fond of play and full of glee?
The sun is sinking in the west,
The sky is covered—rosy red.
The birds are flying—all to bed,
But Mother! do you need no rest?

P. T. Lakshmi, 8 years old
Shillong
Shankar's Weekly
Children's Art Number, 1954-55
New Delhi, India

PAUL WITTY
AND
T. F. GUSTAFSON

Studies of TV—An Eighth Yearly Report*

"Haven't people always had TV?" asked nine year old Sally. Sally is one of today's children who cannot remember a world without TV. How has TV affected these children and others who have known TV for shorter periods of time?

Diverse opinions have been expressed about the effects of TV upon children. Some writers minimize its significance, while others stress undesirable results. Parents have asserted that TV is affecting adversely children's interest in reading and in other academic pursuits. Some teachers, too, have pointed to certain unfortunate features of TV insofar as children's interest and effort in school are concerned. They state that TV is a "time trap for children" and that "TV produces not only idlers, but also bad taste and bad manners." These are a few of the complaints often heard.

On the other hand, children have a different attitude toward TV. Its fascination and appeal are unmistakable. A few weeks ago, Sandy, who is in the second grade, wrote:

I like TV. It's nice to have around the house. Because my brother and I can watch it. We have a nice time watching it too. I watch cowboys sometimes. Our family loves it. Our cat and fish love it too. If I did not have a TV I would not be so happy.

Sandy's classmate, Bob, was also enthusiastic.

When I come in from playing football, I'm sort of tired. TV relaxes me. When fall comes around I see the Chicago Bears Quarterback Club. On every Wednesday I see Disneyland. On every Friday I see The

Vise and Jim Bowie. We have only one TV in our house. Everybody gets to watch four hours of TV.

Pupils in the primary grades usually endorse TV enthusiastically. Reservations are more numerous among children in the upper grades. These children, like some of their elder brothers and sisters in high school, at times prefer radio to TV. They point out that radio can be a companion during study, on the beach, and in the car. They also mention their fondness for musical programs presented by disc jockeys.

Studies of Televiewing

Although it is difficult to gauge precisely the effects of TV upon children, we can get crude estimates by examining studies of their televiewing habits and reactions. Each year since 1949 we have used questionnaires and have conducted interviews with more than 2000 children, their parents, and their teachers in the Chicago area. The inquiries request facts on the amount of televiewing, favorite programs, and attitudes. Additional data are obtained about children's intelligence, marks in school, reading, recreation, and behavior. In 1957, our studies were made in the

*The writers of this article are indebted to teachers and administrators in Evanston and in Kenosha County Schools. To the children and teachers of the Willard School, Evanston, we are especially grateful for the compositions used in this article.

Dr. Witty is Professor of Education at Northwestern University. T. F. Gustafson is on the staff of the Kenosha County (Wisconsin) schools.

Evanston Public Schools and in Kenosha County Schools.

TV came to the Chicago area in 1949. By the spring of 1950, 43 per cent of our pupils had TV sets. In 1951, 68 per cent reported having sets and in 1952, 88 per cent. In 1955, an average of 97 per cent was obtained. In 1957, the per cent was 96 for the entire group of Evanston and Kenosha pupils.

In 1950, the children reported an average of 21 hours per week devoted to TV. This average dropped to 19 hours in 1951. But it went up again after new channels made more diverse programs available. In 1956, the average was 21 hours. For the entire group of pupils studied in 1957, the average was 22½ hours per week. In Kenosha County, the average was considerably higher than in Evanston—26 hours in Kenosha County as compared with nearly 20 in Evanston. The relatively larger amount of televiewing by Kenosha County children may be traceable to a number of items such as the fact that many Kenosha children have acquired sets recently, while in Evanston more pupils have had access to TV for longer periods of time. Of course, averages vary depending on factors such as the time of the year and the nature of the community in which studies are made. An average of 21 to 23 hours per week was reported in 1957 by several teachers in the writer's classes on the Chicago campus of Northwestern University.* These teachers studied the amount of time devoted to TV by pupils in their own classes.

High school students in Evanston, as in earlier studies, were found to devote less time than elementary school pupils to TV.

*The first-named writer of this article.

The average in 1957 was 12 hours per week. Less time is given to TV in the summer than during the other seasons. According to our studies, the drop in televiewing during the summer months is about 20 per cent in total time per week.

What Are the Favorite Programs?

Of course, favorite programs change, and year by year new programs become popular. In 1950, the children's favorites were (in order): *Hopalong Cassidy*, *Howdy Doody*, *Lone Ranger*, *Milton Berle*, *Arthur Godfrey*, and *Small Fry*. In 1952, *I Love Lucy* became the best liked program of both boys and girls, and *My Friend Irma* and *Roy Rogers* became highly popular.

I Love Lucy continued in first place until 1955, when acclaim went to *Disneyland*. *Rin-Tin-Tin* and *Lassie* were also extremely well-liked. In 1956, *Disneyland* again held first rank, with *I Love Lucy*, third. In 1957, Evanston children expressed these preferences: *Disneyland*, *Mickey Mouse Club*, *Lassie*, and *I Love Lucy*. The favorites in Kenosha County were: *Disneyland*, *I Love Lucy*, *Cheyenne*, *Lassie*, and *Fury*. Table I gives the favorites for the elementary groups combined.

Table I
Ten Favorite TV Programs — 1957
Evanston and Kenosha Totals
(Elementary School Pupils)

| |
|-------------------|
| Disneyland |
| Mickey Mouse Club |
| I Love Lucy |
| Lassie |
| Fury |
| Father Knows Best |
| Cheyenne |
| Mighty Mouse |
| Air Power |
| Navy Log |
| Wyatt Earp |

Table II gives the favorite programs of the seventh and eighth grade pupils in Kenosha and Table III presents the preferred programs of high school pupils. It will be noted that several of these programs are also the favorites of the younger pupils. Moreover, *Father Knows Best*, *Cheyenne*, and *I Love Lucy* appear among the preferences at all school levels.

Table II
Ten Favorite Programs of Seventh and Eighth Grade Pupils (Kenosha)

Cheyenne
Disneyland
I Love Lucy
Bandstand Matinee
Navy Log
Wyatt Earp
Fury
Science Fiction
Gunsmoke
Broken Arrow
Father Knows Best

Table III
Ten Favorite TV Programs — Evanston Township High School (9-12 grades)

Steve Allen
Cheyenne
Perry Como
Father Knows Best
Bob Cummings
I Love Lucy
Loretta Young
Alfred Hitchcock
Science Fiction
Playhouse 90

The parents studied from year to year have averaged approximately 20 hours per week televising. When TV was new, Evanston parents spent somewhat more time with TV than now. The group studied this year averaged 18 hours. Kenosha parents, on the other hand, spent 22 hours per week televising. The difference may be traceable to factors mentioned earlier in this paper.

The favorite programs reported by Evanston parents differ somewhat from those in Kenosha County. This year, the following were best liked in Evanston: *I Love Lucy*, *Omnibus*, *Person to Person*, *Playhouse 90*, *What's My Line?*, and *Lawrence Welk*. In Kenosha, these were the programs reported most frequently as the favorites of the parents: *Lawrence Welk*, *I Love Lucy*, and *Perry Como*. The combined list is presented in Table IV.

Table IV
Ten Favorite TV Programs of Parents (Combined List)

I Love Lucy
Lawrence Welk
Perry Como
Father Knows Best
Omnibus
Person to Person
Playhouse 90
What's My Line?
Disneyland
Good Plays
Ed Sullivan

Only 25 per cent of the teachers had TV sets in 1950. An increase in TV ownership gradually raised the percentage until in 1957 it was 93. *What's My Line?* appeared as the first choice in 1951 and continued as a favorite in 1952, 1953, and 1954. The teachers showed less enthusiasm for *I Love Lucy* than did their pupils and the parents during the years 1952-1956. In 1956, the \$64,000 *Question* shared first place with *What's My Line?* The ten programs favored by the teachers in 1957 are found in Table V. Of interest is the difference in the favorites in Evanston and Kenosha. In Evanston, *What's My Line?* and *Omnibus* were at the top of the list, while in Kenosha County, *Lawrence Welk* and *Perry Como* appeared in first and second places.

Table V

Favorite TV Programs of Teachers — 1957
(Combined List)

Lawrence Welk
 Perry Como
 Loretta Young
 Disneyland
 Wide Wide World
 Crossroads
 \$64,000 Question
 Omnibus
 Sports
 Father Knows Best
 What's My Line?
 News
 Ozzie and Harriett
 This Is Your Life
 Lux Video Theater

Problems in Adjustment and Behavior

In our studies both teachers and parents continue to report behavior and adjustment problems associated with TV—such problems as neglect of homework, mealtime disturbance, increased nervousness, fatigue, impoverishment of play, disinterest in school, reduction in reading, and eye strain. But the problems seem to be diminishing according to the parents' and teachers' reports.

The teachers in the writer's classes as well as graduate students have investigated carefully the nature of children who television excessively. Some of the children show serious maladjustment, while others reveal few if any serious behavior problems. In every case of serious maladjustment, they found that other factors, such as a poor home and an unfavorable environment seemed to contribute to the child's undesirable behavior. But these teachers, like the parents, stressed their feeling that too many crime programs are being presented; and they deplored the character of many movies that children see on TV.

In various reports of favorite children's programs over the past eight years, one

may note a high frequency of westerns as well as of programs featuring crime and violence. Despite protests from parents and teachers, producers have continued to make excessively large numbers of such pictures for use on TV. In 1954, *The National Association for Better Radio and Television* reported that programs featuring crime and violence had increased 400 per cent during the preceding three years. In a sixty hour study, 26 hours of programming were found to be "objectionable." Five shows were classified as "most objectionable."

In 1955, the Association reported some improvement traceable to (1) "the steadily declining audiences for crime shows and (2) the availability of programs with positive values."

And in 1956, the evaluation committee of the Association made these statements:

Crime is still the biggest single ingredient offered by the television industry as a whole to lure children to the TV set. Significantly, ALL of the crime shows for children are produced on film, and are available for first and subsequent runs in all TV markets in the U.S. Many of these are also carrying the "Message" of American entertainment for children into several foreign countries. . .

However, there are some brighter aspects of the 1956 programs for children. The volume of "excellent" and "good" programming more than doubles the volume of "objectionable" and "most objectionable" programming, although we must qualify this by again pointing out that more than 20 hours of crime westerns are not included in the volume figures.*

**National Association for Better Radio and Television*, 882 Victoria Avenue, Los Angeles 5, California. Sixth Annual Report on Children's Radio and Television Programs, July 16, 1956, pp. 1-2. The seventh Annual Report was issued August 6, 1957.

The Association has continued to emphasize the undesirability of many westerns and other programs. In 1957, the Association noted "the rapidly increasing number of crime-westerns being broadcast when children are listening."

It is clear that parent and school guidance are needed if children are to learn to make the most of TV and to choose programs with increasing discrimination.

Children should be led, too, to balance the time spent on TV with that spent in other activities in school and out of school. TV is likely to be accepted as entertainment. As such, it may come to replace worthwhile physical activities and desirable group pursuits. Concerning this danger, Edgar Dale writes:

Our almost compulsive search for entertainment is a malady that can both debilitate and destroy. . . .

We need entertainment just as we need sleep, but we can have far too much of it. Entertainment provides needed vitamins but few calories. We need the meat and potatoes of education.*

Television and Success in School

When TV emerged as children's favorite leisure-time activity, some critics saw it as a threat to academic success and interest in school. There was much speculation about its effect on grades. A survey made in a New Jersey School in 1950, revealed that the grades of pupils who watched TV regularly dropped 15 per cent. About the same time, Philip Lewis compared the grades of high school sophomores for a period of a year and a half. Despite a general decrease of 5 per cent in grades, TV actually seemed to help students with some

subjects. But in 1950, Ira Cain, the TV editor of the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*, reported that 60 per cent of junior and senior high school students who owned TV sets made higher grades than in the previous year. The results of studies of grades in relation to the amount of time devoted weekly to TV are also conflicting. Our studies show little relationship between grades and the amount of time spent tele-viewing. This finding appears in several yearly reports. As one teacher remarked: "Good students tend to remain good; poor students stay poor."

In our studies, *excessive* viewing of television seemed to be associated with somewhat lower academic attainment. At the time of several investigations we divided the children into groups on the basis of standard educational tests. Thus, the results one year showed that the average time devoted to TV by the upper fourth of the students was 21 hours per week, while the average of the lower fourth was 26 hours. Although televiewing did not appear to influence educational attainment greatly, there were individuals who were probably affected undesirably. But we should point out that other children were led to do better work in school because of interests awakened by TV.

TV and Children's Reading

It has often been said that children are reading less than before TV. During our first surveys there did indeed seem to be a slight drop in the amount of reading. This decline was reported by parents and teachers alike and by the children too. But recently the trend is toward slightly increased amounts of independent reading.

In our most recent study, it appears

*Edgar Dale, Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University. "Quotable," *The Nation's Schools*, Vol. 56 (August, 1955), p. 34.

that children are reading somewhat more than before TV. Of course, there are children who, like Sally, can not recall a time without TV. But the children in Evanston who do remember the advent of TV responded as follows: Fifty-six per cent said they read *more* now; 39 per cent, less; 5 per cent about the same amount. The parents too reported similarly. Forty-two per cent said their children read more now; 38 per cent, less; and 20 per cent about the same. In Kenosha County, in which more children can recall the time of the arrival of TV, the following results were obtained. Forty-five per cent of the children said they read more; 43 per cent, less; and 12 per cent, about the same. The parents of Kenosha County children stated that 30 per cent read more, and 33 per cent, less. They reported no change in 37 per cent of the cases.

In general, it would seem that children are reading somewhat more now than before TV came to their homes. There are of course children who read less now; these children are considered a real problem by their parents and teachers who look on TV as a threat to reading.

The threat of TV to reading can be met in part by constructive efforts of teachers. Half of the children in the Evanston study report that teachers are offering them guidance and valuable suggestions for televieing. These teachers are encouraging the children to be critical of programs and to discriminate in their selections. They are encouraging children to observe new words they hear on TV and to profit from seeing presentations related to school work. They are guiding children to read books associated with TV programs, and to seek out excellent programs in

science, and in current events, and world affairs. As a result, children are learning from TV much about science, the lands and cultures of other peoples. Some are also discovering satisfactions to be found in books. These acquisitions and attitudes offer a glimpse of what TV at its best can mean especially when individual guidance and encouragement are given, by discriminating teachers. TV presents some problems, it is true, but it also offers unparalleled opportunities for teachers to promote educational and avocational interests of boys and girls.

To offset the threat of TV to reading, parents too can make positive contributions. Parents can help by setting a good model for children to emulate. If they turn frequently to books for information and pleasure, if they read children's stories aloud and show a liking for books, their children will probably conclude that it is worthwhile to read and will in turn learn to enjoy reading. If parents plan a family schedule of recreation that includes reading, televieing, and other activities, most children will be led to assimilate TV in a well-balanced and individually suitable program of leisure-time activity. If TV programs are discussed as a basis for the selection of books, children undoubtedly will read more. And if parents and children together build home libraries and go to the public library, the possible ill-effects of TV will be further offset.

In our encouragement of parents and teachers to make the most of TV, we should not be blind to some undesirable features of TV. We should recognize the fact that many programs feature violence and crime. Moreover, there are too few good educational offerings. But we should

recognize and utilize fully those programs which do provide good entertainment and worthwhile information for children. And we should be aware too of the effective

motivation which can result from associating the interests engendered on TV with desirable home and school endeavor.

LOUISE HOVDE MORTENSEN

Americamera

One picture is worth a thousand words, say the Chinese, and a picture with a 300 word description to go with it can be more interesting than the picture alone. The editors of *Ford Times* have printed many one page descriptions of unusual American scenes, an assignment which should appeal to boys and girls everywhere.

First sentences are important when you have only a page, so authors tell as much as they can right away. Old homes, scenic canyons, museums, Civil War battlefields, mystery houses, modern dams, or local scenes which few know about are all good subjects. Postcards from the corner drugstore can be used to illustrate the Americamera story.

Here are a few first sentences already in print.

"The conglomeration of gables, towers, turrets, lookout platforms, win-

dows, doors, and rambling wings shown at the left are all parts of one house."

"The small Indian village of Grand Portage in the northeast corner of Minnesota was once a gay and lusty metropolis, the gateway to the vast fur empire that extended north to Lake Athabaska and west to the Pacific."

"The top picture on the opposite page shows the Papago Indian Baby Shrine, landmark of a legend among the Papago Indians of southwestern Arizona."

"A little over a century ago Phineas Banning arrived in Southern California with half a dollar in his pocket."

After four or five paragraphs of description, the stories end either with a punch line or a clear explanation of how to arrive at the scene. A standing assignment on Americamera focuses the attention on possible subjects.

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On Our Own in Spelling

This year the spelling books that had been in use were discarded as inadequate and I was told to teach spelling by any method I wished. My plan developed because I wanted the children to like spelling and I also wanted to combine some composition work and handwriting with spelling.

First of all, the children made sets of letter blocks, two inches square. Each child made his letters carefully on the blocks, and the sounds of the letters were taught. Then we started making words with our letter blocks. An example of this was, "Make the word 'bat'. Now change it to 'cat'. Now change this to 'cap'." When the child could do this quite well, we started our new weekly plan for spelling. For this each child brought a notebook (preferably not loose-leaf). This is the way the plan works.

On Monday after some discussion the class dictates to me an oral composition of one paragraph about some school event or mutual interest. Examples of two paragraphs written by the group are given below:

"We are going to *have* an old-fashioned *Christmas* tree. We will *use* strings of popcorn, cranberries, and pine cones. We are going to *make* paper chains and a *star*."

"Winter is *cold* and *icy*. This morning it was 26 below zero. This cold makes our faces *sting* and *prick*. Our fingers tingle. We *put* on our warmest clothes. *ANTON* does not like winter."

The underlined words are the ones

chosen to be learned for spelling. I put this paragraph on the board. The children then select the words which they think are important enough to learn to spell. At this time I try to guide them toward the type of word in the second grade syllabus. We talk about the words selected—their pronunciation, spelling (phonetic or not), and their meanings. Each child then copies the paragraph in his notebook. While they are copying, I suggest to individuals the letters that they need to practice or other things they can do to improve their handwriting.

On Tuesday we practice our words with emphasis on sound. Those who still like to use letter blocks do so, and the others write them either on the board or on scrap paper.

On Wednesday we work on the meanings of the words. Children give original sentences containing the words and related words. As they give the sentences, they practice the spelling words.

Thursday is Game or Fun Day. There are many spelling games which the children like. The ones in which the words are written are more valuable. One game we like is Spelling Basketball. This is a competition between boys and girls. The children take turns tossing words to the members of the opposite team. Each word spelled correctly counts two points toward the score of the team. If a child misses a word, a member of the opposite team "takes it out" and has a chance to get two

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extra points for his team. Occasionally we have to go into an overtime period because of a tie. The excitement becomes intense. We like a spelling relay, too, where three groups compete to see which one can get the list of week's words written correctly first.

On Friday the final test is given. For the children who can write well the test consists of writing from dictation the paragraph dictated on Monday. The children who write more slowly write a list of ten words. Five review words are given each week. Notebooks are checked, and each child writes any misspelled words at the bottom of the page.

This plan is valuable, I think, because the children select their spelling words. Then, too, they suggest them in context and therefore know at least one meaning of the word when they start studying it. They decided that they would like to learn

to spell one of their classmates' names each week, and they now include something about a certain child in the paragraph each week. The notebook may become a class diary by the end of the year. Also, keeping the notebook is an incentive to improving handwriting and provides a record of a year's growth in handwriting. Most important of all, the children enjoy spelling and look forward especially to Mondays and Fridays when they write in their notebooks.

I have been comparing the list of words chosen with those in the state spelling list, and I am sure we will cover most of the words. Besides that the children will have learned many other words—words of local interest, words pertaining to holidays, and even the first names of their classmates. There is also a definite carry-over to their written composition work, and they seem more sure of themselves when they try to write anything original.

WALTER C. DANIEL

Science Gives Material for Language Arts

The current emphasis on science in the elementary school has brought about some interesting language arts experiences.

Most of the classroom activities reported in this article have been fostered and encouraged with the thought that facts which are learned in science provide a possibility for a variety of uses, and that the awareness of the absence of facts can lead to pleasant and profitable projects which may be effective uses of the scientific approach on a rather primary level.

The three types of activities which this

teacher experienced with a sixth grade elementary school class were viewed as welcome additions to the all-important questions, (1) How will information which has been gathered be used? and (2) How will children be stimulated to a rather spontaneous type of classroom project?

1. "A Space Trip"—(dramatic play)

As stimulation for this activity, the teacher planned to have a science lesson

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after the lunch period. When the class entered the room, the window shades were drawn, the over-head lights were out and there was a small desk lamp on the teacher's operating table. Along one of the walls there had been made a long rough drawing of the interior of a space ship. Chairs had been placed along the windows of the ship. Certain important seats had been marked for various positions such as: pilot, co-pilot, navigator, radio-operator, physician, etc. Children were invited to take their places for a trip to Mercury, and the teacher had volunteered to be the radio contact on earth. Before a few minutes had passed, there was a rather enthusiastic "blasting off."

A very few minutes later the teacher established contact with the space travelers and began asking such questions as: "Control Tower to Navigator: How far have you gone in these three minutes since your departure?"

"How much farther do you have to go?"
"What time do you expect to arrive on Mars?"

"How much oxygen have you used so far?"
"What is the condition of the food on board?"

"What objects have you passed?"

The passengers were able to answer some of these questions, and they were not so sure about some of them. Before long, it was decided by the crew that the teacher had better guide them back to earth because they were uncertain about too many important things. Upon reaching earth again, there was a compilation of the things which were important to be learned and the trip was postponed until a later date.

2. "Twinky, the Star that Fell"—(science-fiction play)

The study of meteors which might have been encountered on the flight to Mercury inspired a child to suggest that we use our imagination and write a play about a junior-sized "shooting star"—how it happened to leave its home, the things which it passed as it fell, the changes it experienced, how and where it landed, etc. Twinky turned out to be a mere 10,000 years old, and on his playful and interesting adventure from out of space to its landing in southern Oregon, considerably close to the landing place of one of his illustrious ancestors, his experiences were basically scientific even if a bit exciting. The class eventually tape-recorded the play with the most interesting sound effects.

3. Poetry—

The teacher read some poems to the class on the subject of nature. Two of them dealt with the general subject of astronomy. The next day two children brought poems to school which were about stars and planets. Soon there was a poetry-writing project a-foot. There was little effort here to stick to scientific facts too closely. Rather, an attempt was made to create something out of an appreciation of the universe, itself.

One of these is reproduced here:

RACERS IN THE NIGHT

Fairest horses—

They play up and down the Milky Way;
From moon to star, to cloud to dipper,
There go Skipper, Ripper and Bipper . . .
(They're really falling stars,
But don't seem like that at all.)

State Department Curriculum Guides in Reading

A wide variation exists in both the amount and quality of assistance given to teachers within the various states by their state departments of education. One of the more tangible forms of assistance is the state curriculum guide. Teachers frequently ask for assistance, particularly in the area of teaching reading. It is the purpose of the present report to determine the types of materials about teaching reading provided to elementary teachers by state departments of education.

Requests were sent to each of the forty-eight state departments of education asking for copies of their curriculum guides in reading for the elementary grades. Replies were received from forty-four states. Of those from whom replies were received, three did not send the material out of state and two did not have any such prepared materials. Five reported that their material was out of stock. Of the remaining thirty-four, twenty mailed the material without charge. The remaining fourteen required that payment be made before the material was sent. These data are reported in Table I.

Of the materials received, a wide variety of titles were included. Course of study seemed

to be the most common, but some were called curriculum guides, reading guides, language arts bulletins and several by titles which would make them hardly recognizable as teacher aids.

The formats varied as much as did the titles. Some were printed with heavy covers, while others had covers of the same weight as the pages on which they were printed. (Several had no covers.) Three were mimeographed and the rest printed. A few had pictures spread throughout the material. Blue seems to be the most popular color for such material, with green in weak second place.

The content ranged from practical suggestions of ways in which teachers might actually teach specific listed skills to general discussions on the importance of learning to read without any specific suggestions as to how this is accomplished. The outline method seemed to be the most common, which made it easy for the teacher to locate the specific section in which she was interested. A number would have undoubtedly made good texts for college in philosophy of teaching, but only a few

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TABLE I
DATA ON CURRICULUM GUIDES IN READING OBTAINED FROM
STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION

| | Number of States Reporting | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Mailed without charge | 20 | |
| Mailed upon receipt of payment | 14 | (Minn., Mo., Mont., N.J., N.C., Ore., Penn., S.D., Tex., Utah, Vt., Wash., W.Va.) |
| Out of stock | 5 | (Col., Fla., Ind., La., Md.) |
| Would not send out of state | 3 | (Mass., Kan., Maine) |
| No such prepared material | 2 | (Calif., Tenn.) |
| No reply | 4 | (Ill., N.M., Ohio, R.I.) |

would have been much help in a methods course. Of these, perhaps three stood out as examples of helpful materials which state departments might give to their teachers in that state who want help in teaching reading. These three are the curriculum guides of Alabama, New York, and Pennsylvania.

The Alabama *Course of Study*, Grades 1-12, Bulletin No. 8, contains sections on all areas of instruction, but the reading area extends over eighty pages. The word "objectives" is repeated in numerous sub-headings, and an examination of the material shows that this is exactly what is included. Not only are objectives for each grade specifically stated, but basic principles of teaching at each grade level are given. It is readily apparent that this material would be of benefit to teachers in Alabama at any grade level.

The New York guide, *The Elementary School Curriculum, An Overview*, is not unlike the Alabama course of study. Instead of breaking the guide down into content areas, however, the New York guide is divided into grade levels. At each grade level the chapter has a section on what children are like when they are in that particular grade level, and what skills they will probably learn in each of the content areas. Illustrated with attractive sketches, this material could well be

used with parents in understanding the school program at each grade level.

The *Elementary Course of Study*, Bulletin 233-B, for the State of Pennsylvania is perhaps the most elaborately planned of the three guides mentioned. It has numerous pictures, and is printed on good quality paper with no crowding of the material. Unlike the New York guide, but the same as the Alabama guide, the Pennsylvania guide is divided into chapters on each of the content areas. About fifty pages are devoted to the language arts area. A very useful series of charts entitled, "Characteristics and Interests of Children and Their Implications for Language Arts," for children at each age level is included. In each chart is a list, "What Children Are Like," and another matching list, "What They Can Do With Language." Specific skills to be learned at each grade level are also included.

Any of these three guides could well be an example for other groups wanting to prepare curriculum guides. They are not rigid lists of skills which must be learned at each grade level, but do give the teacher some idea of what skills the children are expected to learn. They include such important facts as what children of each age level are like, and what the teacher can do to help them learn.

THE ECHO

Over the hill a tinkling laugh
Floats on the evening sky—
A merry song, a fairy song,
An elusive, silvery sigh.

The Echo, the Echo, an elfin lass,
Lives in a house of misty glass.

A bugle at dawn,
Sweet and clear,
She echos; then runs
Like a frightened deer.

The Echo, the Echo, an elfin lass,
Lives in a house of misty glass.

Michele Rogers, Grade 5
San Diego City Schools

Why Not Teach Children Semantics?

Semantics has been defined as a study of word meaning, or word-fact relationships. Restated, it involves the process of cultivating better habits of oral and written expression based upon logical thinking. Undoubtedly, there is much commendable teaching already slanted in this direction as a part of regular classroom procedure. At the same time, it is felt that too many children and adults allow rote learning and stereotyped reasoning to dissipate the ability to arrive at sound conclusions. They often accept blindly certain ambiguous analogies, fallacious assumptions, and opinions not predicated on facts, with little regard to objective evaluation.

History reveals that much incompatibility has occurred among the people of the earth because of erroneous thinking and expression. Many serious national and international incidents of the past can be traced directly to misunderstandings resulting from a poor selection of words. Riots have been incited and countries invaded in the name of liberty, justice, and democracy. People have given their lives to the cause of truth and freedom, sometimes with only a hazy understanding of the reasoning behind it all. The very future of our national welfare depends upon individuals who have learned to use their mental powers effectively.

The belief that every child has the right to develop his native endowments according to his potential has long been a bulwark of our educational philosophy. Helping children to appreciate the need for arriving at logical conclusions in order to verbalize and write factually is vital, if

we are to make this philosophy a reality.

What might the teacher keep in mind, in order to encourage the practice of semantics in the classroom?

1. Developing an objective attitude toward language. The dedicated teacher can do much to help children develop the desire to maintain an "open mind" as opposed to a "closed mind." She could devise meaningful everyday illustrations pointing up how some people are convinced that what they know and say is the final word.

In many instances people are not willing to alter their opinions, ideas, and accumulation of facts in the light of available evidence. Many seem to be perfectly willing to adhere to sweeping generalizations with no regard to concrete analysis and synthesis of their thinking. They seem to feel that inductive and deductive reasoning is strictly for the scholar and does not apply to them personally. They remind us of the small puppy who determinedly exhausts himself running around in circles trying to catch his tail. He attempts to succeed again and again. Apparently the impossibility of the task does not register. He does not seem to profit from experience.

On the other hand there is the fish who swims contentedly in the limited confines of his bowl. He appears to be completely oblivious of what is going on outside.

Unfortunately, some people seem to run around in circles, or confine them-

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selves to a limited scope with regard to thinking. This unconscious, or voluntary compartmentalization of the mental powers tends to limit insight and understanding. Further, such an attitude heightens susceptibility to the suggestions and hypnotism of the many forms of linguistic magic, which are frequently presented in daily living as the essence of truth. The individual who abides by stereotyped words and abstractions alone, without checking against the facts misses the enrichment, understanding, and appreciation of meaning so necessary to maintain positive human relationships.

Perhaps we read and listen too much, with too little emphasis upon logical thinking. We cram our heads with so many facts and ideas that we become trash-littered lofts. Many of the threads of reasoning often break under the impact of unorganized clutter. The teacher has the task of helping children to sort through the accumulation of mediocrity and save only that which is quality, so it can be properly appreciated and contemplated at length. Selection and evaluation of the best demands keen judgment, patience, and an objective attitude of mind.

2. Discrimination in the use of words. The English language contains a wide and varied assortment of words used to designate a great many objects and ideas. Many of them are used as stereotypes without taking into account their legitimate meanings. At best, we have to accept the fact that words are merely crude representations of the phenomena and symbols perceived in our environments. They are meaningful only according to the interpretation given them by people. Consequently, the extent of possible misunder-

standing becomes enormous.

I recently asked a group of sixth graders what the word "good" meant to them. As anticipated, many definitions were offered by the pupils who chose to respond. Some of the typical statements were: "carrots are good"; "ministers are good"; and "some people make a good impression." In a few minutes of discussion, I found that the commonplace word "good" can have many interpretations ranging from emphasis on taste or nutritional value, behavior, aesthetic appreciation, and physical fitness to social adequacy. Both the classroom teacher and I felt that many of the children held only a nebulous conception of the word "good." Obviously, this simple configuration which many of us take for granted is not understood on common grounds.

Without doubt, other words such as "wonderful," "bad," "truth," and "lovely" would have produced similar results. Apparently there is need for a more thorough study of word meanings. This is especially important if we accept the thesis that language is the principal instrument by which we can achieve better personal associations and status with our fellow men.

It would seem that some provision should be made in the classroom to help pupils to habitually look for the best meaning of a word as it is used in a specific sentence. This could assist children to scrutinize their own language usage. At the same time, it might help them to understand the total meaning of the verbal, or written expressions of others.

Looking up words in a dictionary is desirable, but not sufficient in itself. Verbatim knowledge is frequently inadequate. To be effective, the definitions found in

the dictionary have to be correlated with words as they are used in context. How might this be done?

Critical listening to platform, television, radio, and classroom speakers could be employed with the goal of analyzing meaning in terms of word content. The words which carried the significant meaning might be examined, in regard to determining what definitions would be most appropriate as they were used in the total thought pattern. Class time could be allotted for ascertaining what other words might have been more acceptable, when there seems to be some doubt of valid usage. The use of a tape recorder is suggested, as it would be possible to repeat certain passages of a speech for more discriminate listening. A similar approach could be used for examining written material, with the exception of the tape recorder.

In driving home the necessity for seeking accurate word meaning, the teacher should bear in mind that words as parts of ideas are warranted only as their consequences justify them. This fact needs to be conveyed to children in a practical and realistic fashion, if there can be hope for a lasting interest in logical word analysis transcending the immediate classroom.

3. Avoiding the use of sweeping generalizations. Much of our behavior is governed by the acceptance of certain inferences as valid facts. For example, we assume that the sun will rise tomorrow. There is a high probability that it will. However, can we predict with certainty that this will "always" be the case? We take for granted that buildings are structurally safe, or we would refuse to enter them and jeopardize our lives. Have there

not been newspaper reports in the past to dispute the conclusion that "all" buildings are safe? When we drive an automobile, we place faith in the steering mechanism to help guide the car safely to our destination. It is a matter of record that mechanical failure of the steering mechanism has caused accidents.

Education has led us to believe that the earth is round. Have you ever observed at first hand the spherical shape of our planet? Is it not true that men for thousands of years accepted the "fact" that the earth was flat? Parents instruct their children that it is possible to be injured, if care is not exercised in crossing the street. Have you ever experimented to determine the validity of this belief?

Some people, especially men, hold the belief that the male is intellectually superior to the female. What evidence can men produce to support this supposition? Also, there are many who have concluded that one race is inferior to another. Are these sweeping generalizations, or can they be corroborated by established facts? Perhaps, do some of us allow our emotions to distort our beliefs?

We subscribe to many "truths," because education or observation has led us to conclude acceptance is logical. This is natural and desirable in many instances, as long as acceptance is based upon the best possible arrangement of facts.

The task of the teacher becomes one of orienting pupils to examine carefully what they accept as "facts" or "truth." She should develop a willingness to leave the back door open, in order to constantly revise belief in the light of more logical evidence as the need becomes apparent. Otherwise, we can expect that many chil-

dren will plod through life using sweeping generalizations not coinciding with valid inferences.

A small neighbor boy recently came home from school and reported to his mother that "all the kids in my room are going to camp this summer." He was very upset by this belief, since the parents had made it clear that the family finances would not support his going to camp. The mother asked the boy how he had managed to arrive at this conclusion. He stated, "I just *know* that all the kids are going." The mother suggested that he use the telephone and call "all" the children in his class in order to prove his assumption. "Oh I don't need to do that," he answered, "John and Bob told me they were going." Unfortunately, this fourth grader had decided that his inference was logical, without considering the other twenty-nine children in his classroom.

The enterprising teacher can do much to help children realize the importance of sound thinking by setting a good example with her own oral and written expressions. She can objectively encourage pupils to listen discriminatingly to the content of professional and classroom speakers to detect and reject illogical reasoning. Opportu-

nity can be afforded to analyze critically what they read, write, hear, and say. Such words as "always," "ever," "all," and "never" should be thoroughly analyzed with respect to appropriate usage as parts of ideas.

The constituents necessary for logical thinking are already present in our classrooms. The subject matter and human raw material need to be kneaded into meaningful wholes. The clutter of mediocre thinking must be cleared away, so that every child is accorded the privilege of developing an awareness of his potential language abilities.

A Chinese philosopher was once asked what the most satisfying experience had been in his long life. After thoughtful deliberation he replied, "I chanced to meet one day a small boy who was crying. A short conversation with the lad revealed he was lost. To the best of my ability I tried to tell him the way. Whereupon, he went down the road singing."

All of our children need to be sent down the road singing, in the secure knowledge that they are equipped with internal defenses to meet the challenges of life.

A BABY BIRDIE

As I was walking in my garden
One day in early spring,
I heard a little baby birdie
Trying to sing.

Helen Richards, Grade 1
San Diego City Schools

Teachers are Nice, but--

by "A pupil"

Teachers are nice. They read you stories and listen to things you tell—if they aren't busy, that is. And they are busy most of the time. They teach you where petroleum comes from and what elephants' tusks are for and stuff like that.

Teachers are all right, but they are always wanting you to do something you don't feel like doing right then. When I get in the middle of painting a picture they say, "Time to put your paints away." When I am reading something exciting they say, "Let's correct our papers now." Who wants to correct the old papers anyway? You probably get D or maybe F, which is worse.

Teachers are mostly dressed up and look like they aren't working at all. Sometimes they wear one old dress until you are good and sick of it. I like the ones that wear earrings and have their hair waved. I asked one teacher if she had any stockings on and she seemed to think that was funny because she really did have.

Teachers are smart about a lot of things, and not all of them are in books. Like knowing that you have a note ready to pass or an eraser half-way thrown at somebody. I asked my mother how they could do that and she said it was a matter of practice. My teachers have all had lots of practice. Seems they don't want you to have fun in school, but just work all the time. It sure gets monotonous.

Some teachers know about baseball and stuff, but mostly they think about how much wheat grows in Kansas. Music teachers are generally happy, only when you sing too loud or want to stamp your feet in rhythms class. Gym is the best.

The funniest thing about teachers, I mean the thing that wears me out, is how one wants you to do one thing and another wants just

the most different thing you can think of. One wants you all to rush in the cloakroom with your coats and get ready for work fast. Another wants you to sit down first and be orderly going into the cloakroom, a row at a time.

Some want the paint lids screwed on, but some say, "Leave 'em off." Some teachers want you to paint big sloppy pictures and do it in a hurry. Some want you to be neat and they don't care much what the picture looks like as long as you don't spill the paint.

One teacher wants you to stand up in front when you talk. Then another one says, "Just sit down, you aren't going to make a speech." A teacher I know has you keep all your papers in your desk until Friday and then carry them home. Then somebody else cusses you out if you leave a paper in your desk over night. What's an old desk for, anyway?

I can't see why teachers have to scowl so. They most all do. You'd think they could laugh some of the time. You soon learn the signals about when they're getting mad. And you're careful so you don't have to stand up in front getting bawled out. I'd like to make some teachers I know stand up in the office a while for their punishment.

Teachers like candy bars and apples and home-made rolls. They're human that way, I'm always surprised to find out. You can make some of them good-natured by bringing them presents.

Teachers are a big help in getting an education. They start the games and help you find the books. But what gets me nervous is the way they've always got something else in mind just when you get ready to do a little really important work.

This article was submitted by Irma Dovey, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

From Manuscript to Cursive-How

Assuming that most of the children in a group give many evidences of readiness to learn cursive writing¹ how can one best help them to make the change from manuscript easily, happily, and adventurously?

First experiences can be shared as a group, with individual help accompanying group evaluations.

As a group they should have had many and varied direct readiness experiences, such as receiving letters in cursive writing from adults, reading notices on the blackboard in cursive writing, seeing committee lists and other things posted in cursive writing (It is always well for such writing to be large), reading words in cursive on calendars, labels, etc.

Granted that they have had these experiences and are somewhat accustomed to the way cursive writing looks the introduction is easy because of their eagerness. One could merely say, "Let's start writing 'real writing' (or 'grown-up writing') and immediately have the delighted attention of the whole group.

However, one can make it real adventure by following that opening with, "Do you know how people ever got started writing in the first place?"

Then one can enjoy the fun of group speculation, odd, searching questions, tantalizing groping, piecing together bits of information, and finally teacher's graphic, historical account of how man groped his way from cave drawings to monkish manuscripts illuminated and colorful as all children love to make their own pages. From this it is but a step to show how as manuscript copying continued it came to be

beautified and made easier and quicker by connecting links between letters.

That connecting line is really one fundamental difference between manuscript and cursive writing. Children can be told this and shown the connecting lines, both by writing short words using the varied forms of connections, such as *come*, *with*, *was*, and by making the connecting lines separately, then showing how they look in letters. There are only three connecting lines:—as in the first movement in letter *i*;—, as the concluding movement in making *o* or *v*, and *w*; and—, as the approaching movement in making *a*, *g*, or *d*.

One reminds the children that manuscript writing is really made up of straight lines and a circle or pieces of a circle. One can show this, writing on the board and analyzing movements. Next one re-writes *come*, *with*, *was* above the manuscript form showing how connecting links join letters.

"The other big difference between manuscript and cursive," one may say to children while demonstrating on the board, "is that in manuscript writing you stop and lift your chalk many times to write one word. But in cursive writing you do not take up your chalk very often. Usually you begin a word and write it entirely before you lift your chalk or pencil. See."

Miss Nulton is a member of the faculty of the College of Education, University of Florida.

¹Lucy Nulton, "Readiness to Change from Manuscript to Cursive," *Elementary English*, October, 1955, p. 382.

By this time children will be commenting that manuscript writing stands up straight, but the other kind slants. One can agree with this casually and remark incidentally that some people's writing slants more than others. If too much attention is paid to slant at this point some children invariably over-do the slanting and have difficulty making recognizable letters. They become more engrossed with slant than with form.

"So there are the only differences between the two kinds of writing: the connecting lines and keeping your chalk down and letting it just flow, like our rhythms, from one letter into the next."

Now, using an easy short word, such as *come*, the teacher writes slowly on the board. The first time or two she may spell as she moves from letter to letter. Two or three more times she writes it with easy, flowing movement, slowly. Then she writes again analyzing movements aloud as she writes. "Start at the bottom. Move up and over. Turn the top over a little. Come back on the same line. Then down and around until it's C. Then the connecting line toward the next letter. Go up to the top. Put on an egg shape. Swing out at the top and that finishes the o. Now turn over and come down. Go back up the same line. Turn over and come down. Back up the same line. Turn over and come down. See. You turn over and come down three times to make an m. Now the connecting line. Turn it into a little loop. That's e. c-o-m-e, come."

"Do you want to see me do it again?"

She follows the process of analyzing movements as she writes the word several times. To avoid monotony one may call at-

tention to specific places before starting the word, make a little joke to emphasize a certain movement, or comment that none of it is hard when you know which way to go. The teacher should write slowly, but with smooth, flowing movement, forming large letters.

The child gets the impression two ways: by seeing the way the written form looks and by seeing which way one moves the chalk to produce the form. When he attempts it himself he must also get the feel of the movement in his muscles. He must, moreover, feel a relaxed, flowing rhythm of movement.

It is important that the whole period be one of pleasure, adventure, fun, and success.

Soon the children have their chance to try it. First experiences should be at the board (not on paper) where the child can use larger muscles and move freely. Several children at the board at once is more comfortable for everybody, as a usual thing, and makes for many opportunities for everybody.

When a child has written he may sit as soon as he has finished. If some child has difficulties he may need to see teacher write the word again, right at his eye level.

After all are seated, the teacher and group may evaluate the writing, being extremely careful to make no comparisons between children's accomplishments and to identify no writing with a specific child for the first several days. (Later one can more directly ask a child to evaluate his own, but not on these sensitive first trials.) Look always for good qualities. Expect children to do the same. Then, "How could this word be improved? What would make it even better?"

We note: "All the letters are the same height." "The *o* is shaped like an egg." "It goes out at the top to meet the *m*."

"The *e* is very skinny. He needs to be fatter." Delighted chortles of glee at teacher's joke and they remember *e* next time. "See this lovely writing here. What makes it so good?" "It's all the same size." "It all goes the same way." So we begin to build concepts of slant. Thus we set standards of size, slant, and form. And we evaluate *writing*, never the writer!

Enough for the first day. We do struggle earnestly to give every child a chance before we stop and to keep writing vividly interesting. It is, after all, largely a process of gaining vivid visual images plus "getting the feel" (kinesthetic images). Try to stop a little this side of complete satisfaction so far as repetitions are concerned. There will be something to come back to.

The following day one may start with another word of similar parts, using the same process of repeatedly writing it on the board, slowly analyzing parts and naming letters "until you can all see it with your eyes shut." Then the children try.

Some children will have difficulties. For them there must be repeated analytical writing. When a child has pronounced difficulty one may occasionally guide his hand slightly, not taking hold of his hand and actually doing the writing but by slipping one's hand under his unoccupied fingers and saying, "You hold the chalk and make it go. I'll just guide your hand a little sometimes."

Thus he gains a feeling of the direction of movement. As he gains confidence his hand relaxes and your hand can ease away until only his little finger lies crooked over

your front finger and the movement is all his. It is like helping him on the walking beam! Next time he goes it alone. An important and satisfying time for both!

"The left handed child may need help, too," someone says. "How can one help him?" The same way, using one's right hand to support and guide his left. Or at times one may even use the left hand to support his left. Though teacher doesn't write with her left hand, such support and guidance gives him confidence that it can be done.

If the child needs such help often, one may judge that this child is not ready for cursive writing. Ease off. Do not expect him to do it. Commend his manuscript writing. Tactfully make it easy and acceptable for him to use manuscript. Make him feel comfortable in doing manuscript well. That is prerequisite to beginning cursive.

As in all other teaching we present easy words first. Avoid such difficulties as *s*, *sch*, *r*, and combinations as in *over*, until easier letters and words are learned.

Soon some child will ask if capitals are made the same way as little letters or "How do you write capitals?"

It is easier and more satisfaction is gained if we begin with those similar to the small letters: *A*, *C*, *M*, *N*, *O*, *P*, *U*, *V*, *W*. (Rounded base of *W* is much easier than pointed and just as legible.)

There will come a time when some child says, "Why don't you just go down the alphabet and teach us all of the little letters and capitals, too?"

Well, why not by this time? So away we go on a new adventure involving relative sizes and positions on the line.

Of small letters, *b*, *h*, *j*, *k*, *q*, *r*, *s*, and *z* seem always to be most difficult. It seems

s (both capital and small) is usually the very most trying of all, followed by *k*! Watch combinations of letters at first.

Be sure to write *words*—important words. Soon that means "our names." "Let's write our names."

If slant begins to demand attention, a vivid means of showing the importance and beauty of regular slant lies in writing a word on the board in exaggerated irregularities of slant and drawing a line through each letter to show the direction toward which it leans. Then write the same word with regularity of slant and show how lines through letters will run parallel. The comparison is graphic and funny.

Writing is to say things. We should expect and allow children to mix cursive and manuscript forms in whatever they are writing for quite a long time. A child wants to use a new ability right then. Who doesn't? And it takes a long time to learn to write enough words to write a whole sentence, much less to write a full story which is coming to life inside one. Warn parents such mixing of forms is natural and likely to occur, even to continue for several weeks. But correct such mixing of forms within one word—*after* the whole story is written.

We need not be disturbed if after children have learned many words they revert to manuscript writing even for many days.¹ Cursive is more laborious and unless children have been squelched, slapped-down, or laughed at, they have much to say. It

gets on paper faster by the most familiar route.

Teacher need not be over-anxious or over-eager. Skip a day or so and have no cursive writing. This whets appetite; renews zest.

When practicing on words choose words that *say* things! *The, an, and*, are most uninteresting! Writing is fun when it tells things, especially (for the eights) if it tells them "like grown-ups write."

These are only suggestions as to how one teacher sometimes does it, with hints as to basic principles involved.

No two teachers (if they are good teachers) teach the same way. No teacher (if she is a good teacher) does it the same way every time. This is but a sample analysis of how one has done it.

However, wherever children are learning to write there should be (1) fun, adventure, challenge; (2) things to be said in writing and satisfaction in the saying; (3) legibility; (4) appreciation of efforts (by teacher *and* other children); (5) sensitivity and tact in recognizing difficulties, offering help, and analyzing accomplishment; and (6) a feeling on the part of children and teacher that a whole new world has opened out upon the horizon.

¹The editor is tempted to remark that such a contingency does not alarm him. He sees no reason why children should not continue to use manuscript writing indefinitely. —J. J. D. B.

Finger Plays

A few years ago I was a silent observer as my sister struggled unsuccessfully to draw a pink stocking over the wiggling toes of her two-year old. Finally in desperation my sister ceased the struggle and playfully tweaked the squirming toes as she chanted, "This little pig went to market. This little pig stayed at home." The two-year old relaxed as she heard the familiar rhyme and then my sister hastily drew the stocking over the relaxed foot!

Not so long ago I watched a group of restless fourth graders as they sang "Eency, Weency Spider," a finger play, which had been set to music. As the fingers, pretending to be a spider, climbed up the water spout and then down again tense bodies relaxed, and eyes sparkled. After a few more songs, the group was ready for their next activity.

In both incidents finger plays had served the purpose of relaxing a two-year old and a group of nine-year olds. What other values did finger plays hold for fourth graders? They had all gone through the stages when finger plays had been used to increase their attention span, help them pronounce certain sounds, and some had learned rote counting by repetition of words.

What possibilities did finger plays hold for creative writing? Could and would fourth graders write finger plays?

So one day I read some finger plays to the group. They responded by repeating and singing some of the finger plays they knew. To stimulate their thinking I asked, "Can you think of ways in which

these finger plays are alike?"

After a discussion the following characteristics were listed on the board:

1. Finger plays have motions.
2. Finger plays tell a story.
3. Numbers are used.
4. We can add or subtract.
5. Certain words are repeated.

I also demonstrated to the group that sometimes we can use a flannel board with finger plays. The objects can be placed on the flannel board and then taken down as the poem directs. Thus art can be correlated with creative writing.

Writing finger plays was something new and different for the children. Each child was free to choose a subject to write on. Consequently there was a wide range of topics.

Thanksgiving influenced Marcia's thinking, for she wrote the finger play:

FIVE LITTLE TURKEYS

1. Five little turkeys sitting in a row,
 2. The first one said, "Do you know what day it is?"
The second one said, "I do, I do!"
The third one said, "Me too, me too!"
The fourth one said, "Let's run, let's run!"
The fifth one said, "Here comes a farmer with a gun!"
 3. Bang! Away they all flew!
And then there were none!
- (1. Hold fingers of one hand erect.
2. Point to each finger as a turkey talks.
3. Clap hands and make running motions with fingers.)

Marcia Legg

Miss Fagerlie was a teacher in the Burris Laboratory School, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana at the time the children carried on these activities.

Sally made paper-cut-outs and used the flannel board when she recited her finger play.

TOYS

1. Billy had five toys.
2. One, two, three, four, five.
3. There were five boys.
4. The first boy said, "I want this drum."
The second boy said, "I want this bear."
The third boy said, "I want this top."
The fourth boy said, "I want this ball."
The fifth boy said, "I want this airplane."
Then there were none.
- (1. Hold up five fingers of right hand.
2. Point to a toy on each count.
3. Hold up five fingers of left hand.
4. At each count the fingers of the left hand are brought back into clenched fist position. The right hand removes the toy from the flannel board.)

Sally Fadely

Sue's finger play can be used to teach subtraction. As each egg cracks open she is subtracting one.

FIVE LITTLE EGGS

Five little eggs lying in the nest.
One cracked open, then there were four.
Four little eggs lying in the nest.
One more cracked open, then there were three.

Three little eggs lying in the nest.
Another came out, then there were two.
Two little eggs lying in the nest.
Another peeked out, then there was one.
One little egg lying in the nest.
It cracked open, then there were none.
Then they all said, "Cheep, cheep, cheep."
(All five fingers are up. At each count the fingers are brought back into clenched fist position. Wiggle all five fingers on the last line.)

Sue Talbert

I felt that my little experiment to discover whether fourth graders would and could write finger plays was successful. Whereas before the children had been content in repeating finger plays they were now on the opposite side of the scale when they were creating. The fourth graders had been challenged by an idea and had readily responded by creating their own finger plays.

Prescription for the Johnny Who Can't Read

The storm which was created by Rudolph Flesch has somewhat subsided, and those people charged with reading instruction in our schools have had time to look at the situation more objectively. Flesch's exclusive phonics approach for all children has been roundly denounced and without a doubt quite justly.

On the other hand many people who are constantly evaluating what they are doing have raised some questions about the techniques they are using because they have discovered that they do not teach *all* children to read.

Most of our teachers in classrooms today have been trained to teach reading according to the manual and when they run into a child who doesn't respond to the manual's instructions they do not know what to do. If there is a special supervisor or remedial reading teacher an S.O.S. is sent out for his services. If there is no such person, the teacher gives the youngster more of the same, hoping that it will work. If it doesn't the youngster is labeled as slow. Reading and mental maturity tests "prove" this because of the low scores which the children receive. These children are passed on and by the time they reach junior high and high school they are hopelessly poor readers. Because of this they barely scrape through high school. Everyone who is a teacher realizes these facts but nothing of any great importance is done about it.

Work being carried on at the Chil-

dren's Medical Center and the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, as well as at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in New York, among others, has shown that there is a large group of children different from their fellows who cannot learn to read by methods employed by the basic reading texts. They have discovered that these children *can* be taught to read by a phonetic approach such as the one developed by Anna Gillingham. Miss Gillingham was formerly Psychologist and Director of Remedial Training in the Ethical Culture School in New York, and now is a school consultant in the field of reading and spelling difficulties.

The dilemma in which the classroom teacher finds herself with regard to these children is similar to that of the physician who limits himself to one form of treatment for all patients regardless of their ailments. We emphasize over and over again that each child is an individual who has different abilities and yet we use the same type of reading text for all. Oh, yes, we have our reading groups—slow, average, and high—but we are using the text of the previous grade or another text at a lower level or one of the new "high interest"—"low reading level" texts. Most teachers will query, "What's wrong with that? Isn't that what we're supposed to do?" The answer is "No!"

Mr. Filbin is a "Helping Teacher" in the Peterborough, New Hampshire, Public Schools.

In a study made by Bertil Hallgren¹ he stated that the incidence of children with this difficulty in a group of 229 children (113 boys—116 girls) he examined was 10.6 per cent of the boys and 4.3 per cent of the girls.

Let's diagnose the child who is having difficulty. He is often ambidextrous, sometimes stutters or has some other speech impediment, is often good in arithmetic—frequently reverses words (*was* instead of *saw*) not only in reading but spelling. He falters in oral reading, fails to get proper attacks, makes impossible guesses, and usually ends up in a complete state of flustered confusion. It is here that the problem must be dealt with realistically—and the teacher must know how to proceed.

These children can be taught successfully by an alphabetic approach. In the method developed by Anna Gillingham, she teaches the child a few letters comprising one or two short vowel sounds and consonants that have only unequivocal sounds and forms which do not become letters if reversed (as b and d). When these letters are known by their names and sounds they can be made into words—synthetic phonics. Slowly new letters and letter combinations are introduced and new words are added and finally used in sentences.

Can this method of teaching be used in the classroom? Yes, it can, and is being used successfully in the Peterborough Consolidated School in Peterborough, New Hampshire. The children who should be taught by this method are grouped to-

gether as a regular group—not as a "problem" group starting in the second grade and continuing through the fifth grade. In tests conducted by Miss Gillingham she has learned that children taught in this way can learn to read fluently and well up to their ability level by the end of the fourth year—children who otherwise might be very well reading in what teachers now call their "slow group" or as the other children call it "the dumb group."

The Peterborough program, which is completing its second year, was set up as an experimental project in two classrooms, a second and third grade. The results have been astonishing. Where children had been stymied at pronouncing words, they themselves were amazed when they could sound out words beyond their grade level. Other children in the same room who were learning by the normal method became interested and begged to read the word cards and to write the sounds on the board as the other children did.

The teachers participating in this experiment felt that the most gratifying outcome was the fact that the children who had been "misfits" because of their lack of reading ability in September were *part* of the class group in June.

Children who have this difficulty are no longer classified as "slow learners" or "dumb" but are recognized as children who have a specific language disability.

The project at Peterborough is considered to be an experimental one. So far it has worked successfully with the children participating. They are learning to read by this method where other methods have failed. These children give promise

¹Bertil Hallgren, "Specific Dyslexia (Congenital Wordblindness)," Ejnar Munksgaard, Copenhagen, 1950.

of what can be done and it is the hope of the staff to have sufficient data at the end of four years to prove that it is as effective as it seems to be now.

Does this mean that all children should be taught in this manner? It is obvious that this is not necessary. If other children can learn to read successfully by the sight method, as the majority can, then

it is not necessary to teach them in this way. Nevertheless, let us recognize these other children and give them the help they need to learn to read. Don't force them to digest what they are incapable of digesting or allow them to sit and do nothing, whispering a hushed Amen when they depart for the next grade on the basis of social promotion.

ELLIOTT D. LANDAU

The Children and The Experts Agree:

Teachers of children's literature are frequently asked whether what the experts recommend is really what children enjoy. In preparing my doctoral dissertation¹ I asked eleven specialists in children's literature² to list 25 books in order and in groups of five (5) from the funniest to those which, in their opinion, would only be moderately funny to eleven or twelve year olds. The purpose of this paper is to report upon their selections and then to present some of the findings of the study

in which children concurred in the choices of the experts.

Dr. Landau is Assistant Professor at the University of Utah.

¹Elliott, Landau. "The Relationship Between Social Class Status and What Sixth Grade Children Say is Funny in Selected Excerpts from Children's Books." New York: New York University, 1955. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

²May Arbuthnot, Jean Betzner, Helen Brogan, Phyllis Fenner, Josette Frank, Lelia Mason, Alice Meeker, Elizabeth Nesbitt, Naomi Noyes, Frances Spain, Ruth Viguers.

TABLE A.
Title, Author and Frequency of Choice of Children's Books Selected by
Eleven Specialists

| Title | Author | Frequency |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| <i>Mary Poppins</i> | P. L. Travers | 10 |
| <i>Homer Price</i> | R. McClosky | 9 |
| <i>Mr. Popper's Penguins</i> | R. Atwater | 8 |
| <i>Henry Huggins</i> | B. Cleary | 8 |
| <i>Ben and Me</i> | R. Lawson | 8 |
| <i>Dr. Doolittle Books</i> | H. Lofting | 7 |
| <i>Pippi Longstocking</i> | A. Lindgren | 6 |
| <i>Honk, the Moose</i> | P. Strong | 6 |
| <i>The Peterkin Papers</i> | L. Hale | 6 |
| <i>Pecos Bill</i> | J. Bowman | 5 |
| <i>Paul Bunyan</i> | E. Shephere | 5 |
| <i>Book of Nonsense</i> | E. Lear | 4 |
| <i>Tom Sawyer</i> | M. Twain | 4 |
| <i>Once the Hodja</i> | V. Kelsey | 4 |
| <i>Miss Pickerell Books</i> | E. MacGregor | 4 |
| <i>Rootabaga Stories</i> | C. Sandburg | 4 |
| <i>The Moffats</i> | E. Estes | 3 |

| Title—(continued) | Author | Frequency |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Herbert</i> | H. Wilson | 3 |
| <i>Chucklebait</i> | M. Scoggin | 3 |
| <i>Tree Toad</i> | R. Davis | 3 |
| <i>Uncle Remus</i> | J. Harris | 3 |
| <i>Wind in the Willows</i> | K. Grahame | 3 |
| <i>Just So Stories</i> | R. Kipling | 3 |
| <i>The Jack Tales</i> | R. Chase | 3 |
| <i>The Story of Serapina</i> | A. White | 3 |
| <i>Alice in Wonderland</i> | L. Carroll | 2 |
| <i>Emil and the Detectives</i> | E. Kastner | 2 |
| <i>Pinocchio</i> | C. Lorenzini | 2 |
| <i>Penrod</i> | B. Tarkington | 2 |
| <i>Ellen Tebbits</i> | B. Cleary | 2 |
| <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> | M. Twain | 2 |
| <i>Yours Till Niagara Falls</i> | W. Morrison | 2 |
| <i>The 21 Balloons</i> | W. DuBois | 2 |
| <i>Mr. Benedict's Lion</i> | W. Edmonds | 2 |
| <i>Freddy and the Space Ship</i> | W. Brooks | 2 |
| <i>This Boy Cody</i> | L. Wilson | 2 |
| <i>Homer, the Tortoise</i> | M. Baker | 2 |
| <i>Mcwinney's Jannt</i> | R. Lawson | 2 |
| <i>Mr. Stormalong</i> | Malcomson and McCormick | 2 |
| <i>Fun, Fun, Fun</i> | P. Fenner | 2 |
| <i>Tales of Laughter</i> | K. Wiggin | 2 |
| <i>Great Grandfather and Honey Tree</i> | S. and Z. Swayne | 2 |
| <i>Yankee Doodle's Cousins</i> | A. Malcolmson | 2 |
| <i>Keldee House</i> | R. Montgomery | 2 |
| <i>Baron Munchausen</i> | Raspe | 2 |
| <i>Peter Graves</i> | W. DuBois | 2 |
| <i>Mr. Twiggs Mistake</i> | R. Lawson | 2 |
| <i>The Saturdays</i> | E. Enright | 2 |
| <i>Otis Spofford</i> | B. Cleary | 2 |
| <i>Horton Hatches the Egg</i> | Seuss | 2 |
| <i>The 500 Hats</i> | Seuss | 2 |
| <i>Wonder Clock</i> | H. Pyle | 2 |
| <i>Old Paul, The Mighty Logger</i> | G. Rounds | 2 |
| <i>Streets of Little Shops</i> | M. Bianco | 2 |
| <i>Tyll Eulenspiegel</i> | M. Jagendorf | 2 |
| <i>The Augustus Books</i> | H. LeGrand | 2 |
| <i>The Fast Sooner Hound</i> | A. Bontemps and J. Conroy | 2 |
| <i>Rabbit Hill</i> | R. Lawson | 2 |
| <i>Three Policemen</i> | W. DuBois | 2 |

Table A lists the title, author, and frequency with which certain books were listed. In preparing the table, a title was included only if it was listed by at least two people. Furthermore, to be part of the data of Table A, a book did not have to be amongst the first five on an expert's list. Unquestionably, *Mary Poppins* leads the

rest because of the number of times it was included on an expert's list. Of the seven excerpts which were drawn from this book, five were rated as being funny by the children who participated in the study. In fact, the children rated the *Mary Poppins* excerpts among the funniest.

TABLE B.
Children's Books Listed on Judges First Five Lists and the Number of Judges
Out of a Total of Eleven Who Listed Them

| Title | Judges Out of Eleven |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Homer Price</i> | 9 |
| <i>Mr. Popper's Penguins</i> | 8 |
| <i>Nonsense of Lear</i> | 2 |
| <i>Mary Poppins</i> | 2 |
| <i>Honk, The Moose</i> | 2 |
| <i>Pecos Bill</i> | 2 |
| <i>Ben and Me</i> | 2 |

Table B. lists those titles which were within the first five listed by the specialists and, thus, considered by them to be "sure-fire" funny stories. The interesting finding here is that from the hundreds of books that might have been listed, nine out of eleven experts chose *Homer Price*. How did the children react to this professional agreement? The study shows that in one instance an excerpt from this book received 5.50 points out of a possible six by one entire group of children. The rating sheets used by the children provided that a rating of six would mean that it was "the funniest thing I ever read." Throughout the entire study 5.50 was the highest rating ever assigned an excerpt and, indeed, the only one was, thus, given to *Homer Price*. From Table B we note that *Mr. Popper's Penguins* was listed in the first five category by eight out of eleven specialists. Here, too, the reaction of 120 children was very positive with the highest score being 4.0 or judged to be "very funny" by the students.

The hilarious book, *Pippi Longstocking*, by Lindgren was, according to Table

A., mentioned among the 25 books only six times and not once was it included by any specialist in her top five category. However, the children in the study—one hundred and twenty (120)—found it to be exceedingly funny, giving it the next highest rating of 5.35 in one group and over 4.0 in three other groups. It is interesting to note that the one group of children, who in the study consistently found no excerpts humorous, deviated only once and gave Pippi's unusual adventures a 4.60 rating while all other excerpts fell below the 3.0 level. In the opinion of the experimenter, this is significant and should give teachers and librarians a lethal weapon to use with those children who never seem to laugh at anything.

From the evidence it would appear that when the experts recommend a humorous book, children heartily concur. In these days when "experts" are being assailed by national publications³, it is good to be able to cite instances where reputable opinion is upheld.

³One example would be the recent issue of *U. S. News and World Report*, article on "The Return to the 3R's."

Windows on the World

The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by IRIS VINTON



Iris Vinton

"The Raw Stuff of Poetry"

The title of this editorial comment is taken from *The Road to Xanadu, a Story in the Ways of the Imagination*, by John Livingston Lowes (Houghton Mifflin, 1927), and "the raw stuff" referred to is science.

To the author "a manuscript volume of ninety leaves in the British Museum" was "one of the most illuminating of human documents in that treasure house—a note book kept by Samuel Taylor Coleridge," for it gradually revealed to Lowes, and for those who read his remarkable study, some of the marvelous ways of the imagination.

In the fifth volume of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, England's scientific society, appears this statement: "there is a Tradition among them, that in November, 1668, a Star appeared below the Body of the Moon within the Horns of it."

Without the key of the notebook who would believe that Coleridge could make poetry out of such raw stuff? But here is how his imagination turned so plain an observation into singing words in *Rime of The Ancient Mariner*: "Til clomb above the eastern bar/The hornèd moon, with one bright star/Within the nether tip."

"Coleridge's memory was tenanted by throngs of visual images derived from books," writes Lowes and, taking the *Ancient Mariner* and *Kubla Khan*, he follows the road through all its windings and turnings, from Xanadu where the sacred river ran, back to the books of travel and of science upon which the poet's memory fastened and from which his imagination created bright and flashing images.

With the invention of the telescope "the seventeenth century, as it became conscious of indefinite space, reflected the new macrocosm,"

writes Marjorie Nicolson of Columbia University, in her absorbing book, *Science and Imagination* (Great Seal Books, a Division of Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1956). "Galileo's tube" touched the poetic imagination and Milton described this newly opened Milky Way:

And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest
Powdered with stars.

Introducing the chapter on "The Microscope and English Imagination" Professor Nicolson observes: "Long before the microscope gave man proof of the existence of a world of minutiae beyond the vision of the human eye, poetic fancy and fairy legend had imagined such a world."

Dr. Robert Hooke, Curator of the Royal Society, published his *Micrographia* in 1664. The revelations of "Hooke's microscope" again mutated the human imagination. Women particularly were captured by the minute world seen for the first time and in spite of the ridicule heaped upon them by men, they persisted in their interest. At least, they were allowed to pursue microscopy without sacrificing what men considered their womanliness. Somehow the pursuit of minutiae was not verboten as belonging exclusively to the male. As Professor Nicolson amusingly points out, "grinders of glass (like cigarette manufacturers in our time) found in women a new buying public."

In *Journal to Stella*, Swift describes a microscope he wishes to buy for a gift: "'Tis

Miss Vinton is Director of Publications for the Boys' Clubs of America. She is also the author of many books, stories, and plays for children.

not the great bulky ones, nor the common little ones, to impale a louse (saving your presence) upon a needle's point; but of a more exact sort, and clearer to the sight, with all its equipage in a little trunk that you may carry in your pocket. Tell me, sirrah, shall I buy it or not for you?"

The discoveries and inventions during the Renaissance impelled writers to seize upon the material of scientists and out of it create great poetry (both in verse and prose structure), that, in turn, fired the imaginations of people. The scientist and the poet were akin—not strangers and enemies.

Today a machine—a wondrous contraption beyond belief to the Renaissance—a man-made satellite circled the earth. A new-made moon traveled the skyways, no doubt, the first of many moons. Tomorrow will see travelers to the Old Moon. Who will be the poet to sing of these things? Where are the people who will listen to his song? And yet this is that magical stuff from which poetry is made.

At the Seventh Thomas Alva Edison Foundation Institute last year, Dr. H. H. Remmers, Director, Division of Educational Reference, Purdue University, speaking on the panel, "Factors in the Early Motivation of Scientists," stated that a recent poll conducted by Purdue had revealed, for instance, that 14 per cent of the students think there is something evil about scientists; 25 per cent think scientists as a group are more than a little bit "odd"; and 35 per cent believe that it is necessary to be a genius to become a good scientist. Such findings might have been expected during the days of the alchemists, but that they are opinions expressed by today's young people is almost incredible.

But these and similar attitudes contribute to the lack of students interested in studying scientific subjects or in preparing for careers in scientific fields. It is obvious that such feelings are part of the disrespect, often bordering on contempt, in which the "intellectual," including the scientist, and his work are held.

Regardless of whether there is the desire to pursue scientific careers, boys and girls today display a serious flaw by this lack of interest in science. Whether they like it or not, their lives will be deeply affected by achievements in medicine, physics, chemistry. And the care and feeding of scientific curiosity applies equally to the boy and the girl, who can no longer be shunted aside or relegated to the back seat in this limitless field.

However, there is beginning to be food in the popular arts for the curiosity to feed upon during those years in the elementary grades when children are reaching out for intellectual satisfaction, when they, too, keep honest serving-men working for them, like Kipling, who said:

I keep six honest serving-men;
(They taught me all I knew)
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.

The time to stimulate and encourage intellectual adventures is during the early years, not endeavor to turn on scientific curiosity, as though it operated like a faucet, when a youngster reaches high school. By then, it's usually too late.

Continuing concern over the meager interest in mathematics, physics, chemistry, and all the rest has made us aware of the singularly pedestrian and unimaginative approach to science in almost all mass media. This, coupled with our concentration on practical application in almost every instance, has just about stifled creative imagination.

"Why concern ourselves so much about our beans for seed, and not be concerned at all about a new generation of men?" asked Henry David Thoreau, the sage of Walden Pond, years ago. His question is still pertinent today.

There are indications that we are taking cognizance of our drift towards a society of mediocrities, who, as Lady Giffard wrote to one of her friends back in the 17th Century, had so little individual resources they were "wretched

without company."

Television is presenting a number of programs on various aspects of science, which, though they can not be said to fire the imagination, at least reveal a trend towards the stimulation of interest. To the teacher these programs (though strained through the sieve of so-called entertainment) may be treated as the entrance to the road along which to lead her children towards the vastness of

Perhaps a thousand other worlds that lie
Remote from us, and latent in the sky

or the minuteness of

praty motes
Far finer than the smallest groates
Of sand or dust
That swarm in the sun.

"Bold Journey" (ABC-TV, Mon., 8:30-9 p.m. NYT), a documentary adventure series, represents a pioneer effort to utilize commercial television for educational purposes. Dr. J. Cloyd Miller, president of New Mexico Western College, past president of the National Education Association, and a member of the NEA Board of Trustees; and Dr. Frank Schlagle, superintendent of schools, Kansas City, Kansas, and secretary of the NEA Board of Trustees, were enthusiastic about the series as a classroom project when I talked with them in New York recently. They serve on the Bold Journey Teacher Award Advisory Council that makes some 30 educational travel grants to teachers participating in the project. Both Dr. Miller and Dr. Schlagle felt the programs could be used effectively as a teaching resource in many areas, such as natural science, social studies, and others. In my viewing of Bold Journey, I found the films honest and refreshingly not hopped up. December programs include Tahiti, Timbuktu, and the Guianas. In January, there will be programs on "Twelve Months in Moorea," and on octopi.

A Teachers' Guide, prepared with the assistance of Dr. Irene Cypher, Department of Communications in Education, New York Uni-

versity, and classroom teachers who use the program, is being used in about 31,500 classrooms at present. Information about participation, if you are not now using the program, is available from Ralston TV-Education Department, Box 339, Radio City Station, New York 19, N. Y.

A custom-made travel adventure series which made its bow in November, was "High Adventure with Lowell Thomas." It consists of seven one-hour films in color which appear over CBS-TV once a month. Check with your local TV listings for exact date and time. The December program goes to the Arctic where our Air Force has its frontline defenses. In January a journey is made into the Venezuelan jungles with a visit to Angel Falls. Future programs include visits to Africa from Timbuktu to Mozambique and on to Madagascar; to the Australian Outback, and to the towering peaks of Nepal.

As Gil Ralston, executive producer of the series, outlined future programs at a press conference in New York, the expedition into the Australian Outback, the territory forming the northwestern corner of the Australian continent, seemed to offer special appeal for younger children because of its strange plants and animals. Kangaroos, emus, flying foxes, dingoes, and kookaburra birds will be captured on the screen, as well as such things as pearl fishermen riding to the bottom of the sea on the backs of five-foot-long turtles.

Accompanying Lowell Thomas and the production group on each safari are ornithologists, anthropologists, geologists, and other scientists who engage in their own independent studies but also serve as resource people when necessary. We can only hope that the results of some of their studies furnish the raw stuff out of which develop interesting books for children.

"The Twentieth Century" is another CBS-TV series, introduced on October 20. Called documentaries, the programs deals with the historical past and with outstanding person-

alities of our times. Half of the programs telecast will run an hour; the other half, half an hour. Tentative date for the story of the development of the automobile is Sunday, December 22, when viewers will also get a preview of an all-electronic highway and the electronic cars that will travel on it. Also tentatively scheduled for January 12, 1958, is an hour-long program on atomic radiation, "Enter with Caution." Future half-hour programs include those on Babe Didricksen and Dr. Jonas Salk. The Prudential Insurance Company of America, sponsors of "The Twentieth Century," make available upon request "Teaching Aids" on the show. Teachers in the elementary grades will find that a number of the programs hold no interest, of course, for younger children.

In cooperation with the National Academy of Sciences and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Columbia Broadcasting System television network present (beginning Sun., Dec. 1, 5-6 p.m. NYT) "Conquest," a series of one-hour programs exploring all the various fields of science today. Each broadcast contains: a science newsreel of new events, products, and discoveries; two detailed film reports of major developments in science; a profile of a famous man or woman scientist; and a feature dramatizing the adventurous and pioneering aspects of science and the place of younger people in science. Basic virus research, tying in with the Asian flu, and the inertial navigation system are among the subjects to be treated in forthcoming programs. Michael Sklar, CBS Public Affairs producer, produces the series. Monsanto Chemical Company, whose president, Dr. Charles Allen Thomas, is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, sponsors "Conquest."

Other programs which suggest possible ties with reading and classroom discussions are: "Watch Mr. Wizard, science experiments with Don Herbert" (NBC-TV, Sun., 1 p.m., NYT) and "Wide Wide World" (NBC-TV, Sun., 4-5:30 p.m., NYT).

If your school is located in one of the five major cities in which The Westinghouse Broadcasting Company owns and operates television stations, you will surely want to pick up "Adventures in Number and Space," featuring Bil Baird's puppets, a program whose purpose is to make mathematics exciting and entertaining to youngsters.

Children's Books on Science¹

Golden Book of Science. By Bertha Parker. Simon & Schuster. \$3.95.

Beginning with the basic ideas of size, speed, etc., this introduces the student to the natural and physical sciences and simple technology. Very attractive illustrations make this especially appealing for the beginner in science. Primary grades.

Fun with Science. By Mae and Ira Freeman. Random House. \$1.50.

A new edition of an old title, this has basic introductory experiments in science with new ones in jet propulsion, electromagnetism, and a chapter on the atom. For middle grades.

World We Live in. By Life Magazine, Simon & Schuster. \$4.95.

A special edition of the original text for young people. A beautiful book covering the scientific history of our earth. Material is treated very broadly and will lead young readers to specific subjects they find of interest. Younger children will enjoy illustrations but will need help reading and interpreting the book. For middle and upper grades.

Who Lives in This House? By Glenn O. Blough. Whittlesey. \$2.50.

The story of animal families, how they build their homes, raise their families, and live together. For the primary grades.

The Rainbow Book of Nature. By Donald Culross Peattie. World. \$4.95.

An introduction to plant and animal life

¹Compiled by Patricia H. Allen, Librarian, *Science World Magazine*.

of different places and seasons, the role of color and form in nature, the classification and relationship of living things to each other. Many color drawings and lists of books, films, and recordings. For the upper grades.

Insects on Parade. By Clarence J. Hylander. Macmillan. \$3.75.

An excellent book for the beginning collector or just for the naturally curious student. Includes a section on insect life and then describes representative species, their distinguishing features, habits, and habitats. For the middle and upper grades.

Mice at Home and Afield. By Olive L. Earle. Morrow. \$2.25.

Leaper, the Story of the Atlantic Salmon. By Robert M. McClung. Morrow. \$2.25.

Insect Engineers; the story of ants. By Ruth Bartlett. \$2.75.

Moles and Shrews. By Charles L. Ripper. Morrow. \$2.50.

These are several of the titles on animal life by this publisher which are simple in text, and have excellent illustrations. Each describes the physical characteristics, habits, behavior, and dwellings of animals and insects. For primary and middle grades.

Magic Bullets. By Louis Sutherland. Little Brown. \$3.00.

The "Magic Bullets" are the vaccines and antitoxins which have been developed to fight the diseases of mankind. This is the story of the events that lead to their discovery. For middle and upper grades.

The Great Nutrition Puzzle. By Dorothy Calahan and Alma S. Payne. Scribner. \$2.95.

The story of research and discovery in food since Grecian times with a glimpse of what is to come when atomic energy is used to produce and preserve food. For upper grades.

Your Food and You. By Herbert S. Zim. Morrow. \$2.50.

Why we eat, what food is, how we digest it, and how we use it. Good black and white drawings and diagrams help explain the text.

For primary and middle grades.

Story of Rocks. By Dorothy E. Shuttlesworth. Garden City. \$2.50.

Well illustrated in color, this introduction to geology includes rock identification, classification, formations, rock testing, and uses of rock. There are also suggestions for starting a rock collection with listings of rocks and minerals by states. For middle grades.

Madame Curie. By Eileen Bigland. Criterion Books. \$3.00.

A simple biography of the woman scientist, her personal life and struggle to solve one of the mysteries of science, her love for and marriage to Pierre Curie. A good biography for girls. For upper grades.

Weather. By Paul E. Lehr. Simon & Schuster. Paper, \$1.00.

This book is best described by its subtitle, *Air Masses, Clouds, Rainfall, Storms, Weather, Maps, Climate.* Here is another Golden Nature Guide with information graphically presented to appeal to all ages. Colorful, clear illustrations. For upper grades up to adults.

The Earth Satellite. By John Lewellen. Knopf. \$2.25.

A very simple explanation of the development and planning for the launching of our satellite into space for very young readers. For middle grades.

Exploring Mars. By Roy Gallant. Garden City. \$2.50.

Exploring the Moon. By Roy Gallant. Garden City. \$2.50.

Exploring the Universe. By Roy Gallant. Garden City. \$2.50.

These three introductory astronomy books provide the history of early beliefs and study

as well as up-to-date knowledge. They also summarize the questions still to be answered. Colorful illustrations and diagrams make these books exceptionally enjoyable. For middle and upper grades.

The Story of Power. By Edward Stoddar. Garden City. \$2.00.

How we get power and how we use it. Includes power's original sources such as wind and water up to atomic energy. Very clear text with good diagrams. For middle and upper grades.

The Wonderful World of Archaeology. By Ronald F. Jessup. Garden City. \$2.95.

Brief and exciting stories of man's efforts to preserve records of early civilizations. De-

scribes the science and skill which go into unearthing, reconstructing, and preserving man's history. For upper grades.

New Era of Flight. By Lewis Zarem and Robert H. Maltby. Dutton. \$3.75.

A photographic book on military aeronautics including the problems of high speed, high altitude, and missiles. Special appeal to boys. For upper grades.

Exploring the Atom. By Marie Neurath. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. \$2.00.

Explains the atom in very simple language and large clear diagrams, showing how such great power comes from so minute a particle. Anyone looking for a simple explanation will enjoy this. For all grades.

NELLIE, THE COLLIE

Nellie was a Collie who lived upon a farm;
She watched the sheep in pastures,
To keep them from all harm.

One night a big gray wolf came down
And tried to catch a sheep.
It was midnight when he came and
Gave his mighty leap;
But Nellie would not let him stay, she
gave a furious bark.

The farmer rose and with his gun ran out
into the dark.
He shot the wolf right through the head
And patted faithful Nellie,
And then they went into the house,
And had some bread and jelly.

Daphne Thom, 8 years old
Vancouver

Shankar's Weekly
Children's Art Number, 1954-55
New Delhi, India

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

William A. Jenkins

Children's Book Clubs

With the launching this fall of the Arrow Book Club another step has been taken to meet the reading needs of children. This club, sponsored by Scholastic Magazines, offers full-length paperback books at 25 and 35 cents for children 8-12, in grades 4 to 6.

The club will offer the middle graders 16 books four times a year. It will have no membership fee; students may purchase books as they wish, but an order may be sent only if a minimum of 15 books are ordered. Dividend books will go to build up the classroom library.

The club director has indicated that the book club will attempt to span the interest and reading abilities of the children, with selections on adventure, mysteries, classics, animal stories, science, historical fiction, sports, handy reference, and how-to-do-it books. With each bi-monthly list will go a free *Memo to Teachers*, giving the teacher or librarian sponsor of an Arrow Book Club full information about the reading level of each book.

The first offerings of the Arrow Book Club were these:

Clarence, the TV Dog by Patricia Lauber (Coward-McCann)

Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson (Pocket)

Heidi by Johanna Spyri (Wonder)

Mystery of the Piper's Ghost by Zillah K. Macdonald (TAB)

Miss Pickerell Goes to Mars by Ellen MacGregor (McGraw)

Oliver Becomes a Weatherman by Jack Bechdolt (TAB)

Football for Beginners (Wonder)

Wyatt Earp (Wonder)

Boy on the Mayflower by Iris Vinton (TAB)

Saint Joan by Marjorie

Mattern (Royal)

Black Storm by Thomas C.

Hinkle (Morrow)

A Chimp in the Family by Charlotte Becker (Messner)

Cub Scout Book of Cowboys and Indians by E. Andreas (Wonder)

Ghost-Town Adventure by Rutherford Montgomery (Holt)

Dennis the Menace by Ketcham (Pocket)

A Barrel of Fun by Edna Preston (TAB)

Arrow Book Club is the newest addition to the Scholastic Book Service. These include the Teen Age Book Club, begun in 1949, and which to date has distributed more than 20 million books to its readers. There are at present 19,000 Teen Age Book Clubs with more than a million junior and senior high school students as members. As do Arrow Book Club members, TAB members also receive paperbound editions, some reprints, others originals published for the club.

A third major book club, and one which distributes hardbound books, is the Weekly Reader Children's Book Club. The club was begun in 1953 to provide books for the 8-12 year olds. This year more than 300,000 members will receive the six books which go to members.

The December selection of the Weekly Reader Children's Book Club is *Follow My Leader* by James Garfield (Viking). The bonus selection is Walt Disney's *Secrets of Life* (Simon and Schuster).

Children's book clubs are certainly a vital assistant for introducing children to books which are both entertaining and informative. Just as adult book clubs have helped to increase

¹University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

that small number of Americans who read with some degree of regularity they can do the same for children who are just mastering the skill and joys of reading.



Miscellaneous items of interest

Television for Children is a 60-page illustrated book prepared by the Foundation for Character Education in cooperation with Boston University's School of Education. It is intended to guide producers and parents in preparing and selecting suitable child programs. Consensus, not necessarily unanimous, of ten authorities in fields of broadcasting, education, and psychology, is that TV seems to have little or no measurable effect upon a child's performance in school. Free to broadcasters, educational organizations, children program sponsors, governmental agencies and special libraries, through the U.S. Office of Education and the NARTB.

Handwriting Kit aimed to help children see the need for good handwriting practices and to help them improve their techniques. The kit contains teacher's instructions and classroom workbooks for pupils. Order free from the W. A. Shaeffer Pen Company, Department 1, Fort Madison, Iowa.

Creating with Materials for Work and Play is another of the useful packets of brief articles from the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 Fifteenth Street, N.W., Washington 5, D. C. This packet includes articles on painting and drawing materials, 3-D materials, doll play and other dramatic play, block play and accessory toys, wood and tools, masks and simple costumes, puppetry, materials for science, cooking, formulas for this and that, and materials for room environment. Price, \$.75.

57 Games for Learning is a booklet of games for teachers to use with their groups when they are reviewing the tool subjects. Order from Associated Public School Systems, 525 West 120th Street, New York 27. Price \$1.

A Pictorial Study of Coffee is offered free to teachers by the Nestle Company, Two Wil-

liam Street, White Plains, New York. The six-page pamphlet is a reprint of the article that appeared in *Life* on March 18. The story of coffee from its discovery to its place in the American home today is told. Up to 35 reprints may be ordered by one teacher.

Better Than Rating is a booklet which gives some new approaches to the appraisal of teaching services. Order from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. Price \$1.25.

Growing Up With Books is a descriptive list of 250 books which children will read and enjoy. Order from R. R. Bowker Company, 62 West 45th Street, New York 36. Price 100 for \$3.35.

Encyclopedia—A Key to Effective Teaching is a 48-page handbook of ideas for teachers on the use of the encyclopedia. It is especially designed to help teachers make the best possible use of reference books. Order free from the American Textbook Publishers Institute, P. O. Box 133, G.P.O., New York 1. Principals may request quantities for distribution to their teachers.

A Handbook for Instructional Leaders on the Use of Encyclopedias in Schools, a report of a workshop held at the University of Washington, includes criteria for evaluating reference materials and determining a school's needs for such materials, suggestions for acquainting teachers with the content and uses of reference sets, and other practical suggestions. Single copies may be ordered free from the College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle 5.

Six Little Indians Had Good Bicycles, a two-color poster, 17" x 22½", containing a parody on the little Indian song, teaches good bicycling habits. Order single copy free from National Commission on Safety Education, NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington 6, D. C.

Aids to interesting lessons are described in a leaflet from Fearon Publishers, 2450 Fillmore

Street, San Francisco 15, California. Materials available include: "Matting and Displaying the Work of Children" (\$1), "Map and Globe Activities for Children" (\$1.50), "Well-Seasoned Holiday Art" (\$1), "How to Stimulate Your Science Program" (\$1), "Simplified Paper Sculpture in the Classroom" (\$1.50), and "100 Blackboard Games" (\$1).

Bibliography for Children's Reading is a selective list of books for children in grades 3 to 8, grouped according to such human relations attitudes as cooperation, responsibility, dependability, courage, and generosity. Write to Metropolitan School Study Council, 525 West 120th Street, New York 27. Price \$.20.



Films, filmstrips, records, plays, scripts

From a recent release of the Children's Book Council we list a portion of the list of agencies which can furnish you with information about films, filmstrips, records, plays, and scripts which may be used with the reading interests of children and young people:

1. Selective annotated lists of films available from many public libraries.
2. Film catalogs from university audio-visual centers: Indiana University, Audio-Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana; University of Minnesota, Audio-Visual Extension Service, 115-212 TSMa, Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York University, Film Library, 26 Washington Place, New York 3; University of Illinois, Audio-Visual Aids Service, 203 Arcade Building, Champaign, Illinois; University of Michigan, Audio-Visual Center, 4028 Administration Building, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
3. "Educational Film Guide" and "Filmstrip Guide." H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York 53. Classified annual listings with supplements, available in many libraries.
4. "Films for Children #2," EFLA Service Supplement, Educational Film Library Association,

Inc., 345 E. 46th Street, New York 17. \$.50.

5. Bertha Landers Film Reviewing Service, 3535 Central Street, Kansas City 11, Missouri. A monthly reviewing service available to subscribers only.

6. Monthly film review column in *The Booklist*, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago 11.

7. "Resource Bulletin," a monthly column in *Grade Teachers*, The Educational Publishing Corp., Darien, Connecticut.

8. "Evaluation of New Films," a monthly column in *Educational Screen*, 2052 North Lincoln Park West, Chicago.

9. "Films and Filmstrips," a weekly column in *Scholastic Teacher*, 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36.

You may rent, purchase, or borrow films and film strips from:

1. Public libraries which maintain their own film collections.
2. Audio-visual departments of many universities.
3. Your local commercial distributor (see your local classified telephone directory).
4. Film producers with offices in many major cities throughout the country; Picture Book Parade (films based on children's picture books), Weston Woods Studios, Weston, Connecticut; and, of course, National Council of Teachers of English, 704 South 6th Street, Champaign, Illinois.
5. Libraries, which, with or without standing film collections of their own, subscribe to one of the cooperative film services now functioning in a number of states. Libraries subscribing to these services acquire films either on a regular circulating basis, or make individual or group bookings from a central pool. (See *Cooperative Film Services in Public Libraries* by Patricia Blair Cory. Chicago: American Library Association, 1956.

For help in selecting records you may refer to:

1. Annotated lists of record collections in many public libraries.

2. "Records and Tapes," a weekly column in *Scholastic Teacher*, 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36; "Children's Record Reviews," Box 192, Woodmere, New York, a reviewing service issued five times a year, available at many public libraries or by annual subscription.

3. Catalogs from commercial companies, among them: Children's Music Center (catalog of recordings correlated with books) 2858 West Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles 6; Newbery Records (dramatizations of Newbery Medal winners) 221 Fourth Avenue, New York 3; Chandler Records, 277 West 12th Street, New York 14; Folkways Records, 117 West 46th Street, New York 36; Tenney Records, 2984 College Avenue, Berkeley 5, California; Young People's Records, 100 Sixth Avenue, New York 13; Caedman Publishers, 277 Fifth Avenue, New York 16; Decca Records, Inc., 50 West 57th Street, New York 19; Capitol Records, Inc., 1730 Broadway, New York 19; Children's Record Guild, 27 Thompson Street, New York 13; Columbia Records, Educational Department, 799 Seventh Avenue, New York 19; RCA Victor Record Division (Catalog Department), 155 East 24th Street, New York 10.

You may obtain records from:

1. Public library collections.

2. The American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago 11 (storytelling records of folktales and myths).

3. The commercial recording companies listed above.

4. Children's book departments of book publishing houses which occasionally make recorded dramatizations of some of their publications. The Children's Book Council *Calendar* usually carries announcements of these).

For help in selecting plays or scripts you may refer to:

1. The *Subject Index to Children's Plays*, published by the American Library Association and available in many public libraries.

2. "Catalog of Children's Plays" and "Radio Script Catalog," available from Association of Junior Leagues of America, Waldorf-Astoria, New York 22.

3. Lists from Plays, Inc., 8 Arlington Street, Boston 16 (write stating fully your requirements); H. W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, New York 62; *Scholastic Teacher*, 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36; Coach House Press, 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago 4.

You may obtain plays and scripts from the sources in (2) and (3) above.

Single copies of the complete list may be obtained free from the Children's Book Council, 50 West 53rd Street, New York 19. Send a stamped, self-addressed envelope. In quantities the list may be obtained 10 for \$30.



Follett award

Elizabeth Guilfoile won the Follett Publishing Company Beginning-to-Read award of \$2000 for her book, *Nobody Listens to Andrew*. The award was for a story of high interest level which would be easy enough for beginning readers to read for themselves.

Miss Guilfoile became chairman of the NCTE Elementary Section Committee last month, replacing Alvina Treut Burrows.



Reading institute

The Annual Reading Institute at Temple University will be held in Philadelphia, January 27 through January 31, 1958. The theme will be "Reading in the Total School Program."

Further information may be obtained by writing to The Reading Clinic, Department of Psychology, Temple University, Philadelphia 22.



Carnival of Books

Here are the "Carnival of Books" programs scheduled for December:

December 1 *The Story of Caves* by Dorothy Sterling (Doubleday)

December 8 *The Golden Doors* by Edward Fenton (Doubleday)

December 15 *Tiger's Chance* by Jan Henry (Harcourt)

December 22 *The Three Kings of Saba* by Alf Evers (Lippincott)

December 29 *The Enormous Egg* by Oliver Butterworth (Little)

The dates given are for Chicago broadcast on station WMAQ, Sundays, 7:45-8:00. Check the local station in your area for day and time of broadcast.



Books for teacher

Why Teach? by D. Louise Sharp. Henry Holt and Company, 1957. 240 pp. \$4. Miss Sharp, dean of women and professor of psychology at Central Michigan College asked outstanding men and women in the professions, industry, religion, politics and the arts to submit articles concerning their views on teaching, the influence of teachers on their lives, or the satisfactions to be derived from teaching as a profession. Their 120 responses form a volume that is inspiring, enlightening, and even entertaining. The contributors, arranged alphabetically in the book, include the famous, such as Prof. Frank Baxter, Mary Ellen Chase, Norman Cousins, Clifton Fadiman, Omar Bradley, Stuart Chase, Paul Hoffman, and Chet Huntley. Lesser lights include a college student; Robert R. Suchy, a physics teacher in Milwaukee; and classroom teachers from Sante Fe, New Haven, and Montgomery, Alabama.



The Junior Literary Guild

December 1957 Junior Literary Guild selections:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old

How the Grinch Stole Christmas by Dr. Seuss, Random House, \$2.50

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old

The Runaway by Dorothy Clewes, Coward-McCann, \$2.50

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old

Favorite Poems Old and New selected by Helen Ferris, Doubleday, \$4.75

For girls 12 to 16 years old

Happy Birthday, Dear Beany by Lenora Mattingly Weber, Thomas Y. Crowell, \$3.00

For boys 12 to 16 years old

In This Corner by Adrien Stoutenburg, Westminster Press, \$2.75

* * *

Each month we receive *American Heritage*, the Magazine of History. Often its contents don't relate to the language arts, but seldom if ever are its contents without a number of items of interest to the reader who wants something a bit more substantive than the contents of the popular periodicals, and less forbidding than much that is found in the professional journals.

In the October number, for example, Walter Havighurst's piece on the McGuffey texts, "Primer from a Green World," was a fascinating piece on how his name, fame, and readers spread across the young country. At the same sitting we took in Morton M. Hunt's "First by Land," the story of Alexander Mackenzie, the first man ever to cross North America (eleven years before Lewis and Clark); and Doctor Gatling and His Gun, by Philip Van Doren Stern, a story of how man got the first practicable repeating gun (and how the gangster got one of his pet terms).

Our fondness for the magazine is evidently shared. The circulation of the magazine increased 75,000 during the last year, to 250,000. The magazine-book is sold by subscription (551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17) and by bookstore sale of single copies.

* * *

Gods, Heroes and Men of Ancient Greece by W. H. D. Rouse (Signet Key KD 357) and *Don Quixote*, translated by Walter Starkie (Mentor MD 207) are two new paperbacks which we received. They will be useful in some classrooms and will make good general reading.



May Hill Arbuthnot

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

Mrs. Arbuthnot is well-known as a writer and lecturer in the field of children's literature. She is the author of CHILDREN AND BOOKS (Scott, Foresman, 1957, revised edition), and three anthologies, combined in the single volume, THE ARBUTHNOT ANTHOLOGY (Scott, Foresman, 1953).

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

Picture-Stories for the Youngest

The picture books this year are more beautiful and important than in many seasons. From ultra modern design to exquisite details and prettiness, the pictures are a delight and the texts provocative. Here are just a few samples with more to come next month.

I Wish, I Wish. Written and Illustrated by Lisl Weil. Houghton, 1957. \$2.50. (3-8).

What Ludwig Bemelmans' pictures do for Paris, Lisl Weil's entrancing illustrations do for Florence, and the story is good also. The sketches make it clear that Francesca did not live in one of the Florentine palaces. Perhaps that is why she went daily from her poor little street to the great Pitti gallery, where she

looked at the pictures, watched the artists copying them, and wished a wish as big and magnificent as she was small. One day, Francesca found a stray cat, but a most unusual one, for round its neck it wore a locket. The cat led Francesca into a startling adventure and the locket led to the fulfillment of her heart's desire. A story children as old as nine or ten may well enjoy!

A

The March Wind. By Inez Rice. Illustrated by Vladimir Bobri. Lothrop, 1957. \$2.75. (5-9)

When other picture books are forgotten this will be remembered both for its unusual story and its wild, beautiful pictures. "The little boy picked up the hat from the gutter" it begins, and although it was soggy with rain, he had to put it on. Immediately he felt like a cowboy, a soldier and several other heroes until



I Wish, I Wish



Margaret Mary Clark



March Wind

suddenly the owner of the hat caught up with him. Now who the owner was is a dark secret not revealed until the end of the book. Anyway, there's no use telling, for as the little boy knew, no one would believe him anyway. The somber, exciting pictures with occasional flashes of bright color are exactly right for this unusual tale.

A

The Happy Lion Roars. By Louise Fatio. Illustrated by Roger Duvoisin. Whittlesey, 1957. \$2.00. (4-8)

It is hard to imagine our favorite Happy Lion turned morose, but that is what happened.

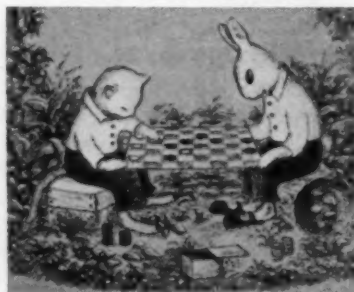


Francois, the townspeople and the doctor all noticed it, and even a timely pill did no good. But apparently the Happy Lion had his own private theories because when a travelling circus came along and he beheld a beauteous,

kitten-like lioness, he knew at once it was not a pill he needed but a pleasant companion. How the extremely Happy Lion made himself even happier, came as a complete surprise to the townspeople and the owner of the lioness. There were complications, but suffice it to say, the Happy Lion sighed and roared no more. His amiability was restored and Francois had a lioness for his new friend. The pictures are indescribably droll. Mlle. Lioness with her sheep's eyes is funny but Happy Lion looking blandly innocent, but with two tails showing, sends the children into gales of hilarity.

A

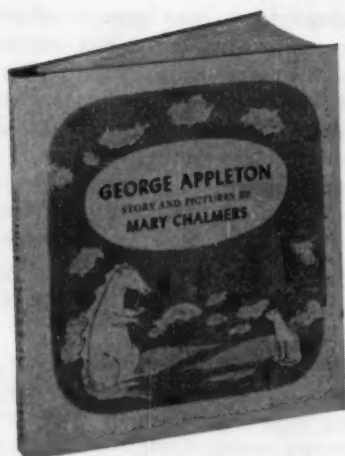
Kevin. Written and Illustrated by Mary Chalmers. Harper, 1957. \$1.50. (3-6)



Kevin

George Appleton. Written and Illustrated by Mary Chalmers. Harper, 1957. \$1.50. (3-6)

These small, pretty picture books of Mary Chalmers have unusual charm. *Kevin* was a dresy rabbit with a passion for flowers. He lived in the woods but traveled around a bit, and in town he made friends with Llewellyn, the cat and Mr. Jones, a gardener. When Kevin returned to the woods Llewellyn went with him, and although the two friends visited Mr. Jones now and then, they were mostly busy in their own beautiful woods. The second book is about Trilby, another cat, who met an amiable but lonely dragon named George Appleton. They struck up a lasting friendship and George was no longer lonely. The charm of these small books lies in their atmosphere



of warm friendliness, the high-sounding names of the characters, the inconsequential storytelling style and the delicate pictures of woods, fields, small beasts and an occasional human.

A

Bianco and the New World. Written and Illustrated by Tony Palazzo. Viking, 1957. \$2.75. (4-8).

Bianco, the little donkey, found the New York pavements exceedingly hard after the fields of Sicily, so her kind master, Marco, knew he must have her shod. When they came to the blacksmith's shop there was an uproar. Blackie, a big circus horse, refused to let the blacksmith touch him. Blackie snorted, kicked and reared until suddenly he spotted the little white donkey. Instantly, the big nervous horse quieted down. Where Bianco went, he went and what Bianco did, he did, as peacefully as a kitten. But when Marco tried to lead his donkey away, the uproar started all over again. This led to a strange new life for Marco and his little white Bianco but in the end, they were as contented as the once rambunctious Blackie was with his little donkey friend, Bianco. Here is a story with substance, and the author's spirited illustrations add vigor to an appealing text.

A

How the Grinch Stole Christmas. Written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss (pseud. for Theodore Seuss Geisel). Random, 1957. \$2.50. (5-7).

A Grinch, it seems, is an old sour puss who envies people's good times and hates especially the Whos' celebrations of Christmas. (You remember the Whos, of course.) So Grinch thought up a way to steal the Whos' Christmas with such thoroughness that he was sure Christmas was dead and done for, that year at least. How he managed this ill deed and how the Whos came through with a warm and jubilant Christmas, are surprises only the ingenious Dr. Seuss could think up. This book is a guaranteed anti-freeze for hard hearts.

A

Today's Children

Katie Kittenheart. By Miriam Mason. Illustrated by Charles Geer. Macmillan, 1957. \$2.50. (6-10).

Of Miriam Mason's many easy-to-read books, there has never been a dull one and her last young heroine, Katie, is surely one of the most appealing. Her surname was really, Kattenhart, but when a near-sighted teacher read it as "Kittenheart" Katie was too kind to correct him, and it certainly was the right name for her. Katie was always getting into mild scrapes because of her passion for being kind or helpful or useful and also because she was forever imagining herself in various roles. First she wanted to be Miss Aberdeen, her teacher. Then, after an airplane ride she decided to be an air stewardess. But the role

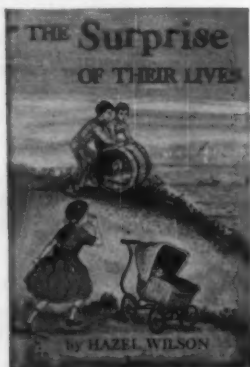


Katie Kittenheart

of Miss Aberdeen persisted because Katie just naturally loved babies and young children or young mice or kittens or any small creature in need of nurturing. How Katie finally forgot all of her roles and met a dangerous emergency with only her own courage and good sense to guide her, makes a fine conclusion to the story of an endearing young heroine. A

The Surprise of Their Lives. By Hazel Wilson.

Illustrated by Robert Henneberger. Little, Brown, 1957. \$3.00. (8-12)



Mary Jo Dunham of Portland, Maine may not be exactly contemporary but she will seem so to young readers. With her pleasant family—mother and father Dunham, an enterprising brother, James and an irresistible baby sister, Ellen, this starts out to be a nice story of family life and community activities. There are school adventures, parties and a few exciting innovations of the children's own, but there is also a villain. Poor Lizzie Atkins, motherless, uncared for and unloving, is probably the toughest little ruffian in the town. Uninvited to parties she gets even in a big way and gives Mary Jo and James the surprise of their lives. It is too amazing to give away, but suffice it to say it carries those two astonished children far from home for a long period. Less stout-hearted youngsters would have been too frightened or heartsick to rally, but not this pair. The story of how they made out is both serious and

exceedingly funny. For a lesson in self-reliance without any moralizing this is a very human and amusing story with a warm ending that includes Lizzie. Mrs. Wilson with her *Owen Boys*, *Herbert* series and biographies has always written about boys, so it is a pleasure to greet this young heroine and to know that her biography of Lafayette's gallant wife is on the way. A

That Jud! By Elizabeth Bragdon. Illustrated by George Schreiber. Viking, 1957. \$2.50. (10-14).

This perceptive study of a boy at odds with the world is sensitively handled and will have meaning to many boys who are going through a temporary period of rebellious unhappiness. Orphaned Jud has a good home with Captain Ben but little affection. Miz Hanks, the housekeeper, is definitely against the boy. "That Jud!" she says, and venomously reports everything Jud does that is wrong. Lonely, hurt and frustrated Jud has only his dog, Skipper, and the camp he is trying to build on Nubbin Island to comfort him. A young man, Homer, befriends the boy for awhile and then, callously drops him for a girl friend. Jud's revenge is to break all the windows in Homer's boat house. Ashamed, he works to pay for their replacement, and when things look darkest a city man offers Jud a responsible job caring for his fine boats. The boy rises to this trust happily until he is accused of starting a fire



That Jud!

that he was actually trying to put out. The little fishing village is rocked by this scandal, but before he is cleared Jud discovers that he has many loyal friends, including Homer and Captain Ben who defend him and show him their deep affection. The celebration on Nubbin Island at the completed camp with all of his best friends is a moving event. Jud is host to the city man who trusted him, and of course, to Homer and Captain Ben. It is a big day that more than makes up for the hurts and heartaches of the past. A

New Collections of Old Tales

Russian Tales and Legends. By Charles Downing. Illustrated by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1957. \$3.50. (8-12)

Yugoslav Folk Tales. By Nada Curcija-Prodanovic. Illustrated by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1957. \$3.50. (8-12)

These two new titles added to the Oxford series of folk tales brings the number to eight. The fine format and illustrations are the same for all the books and in the last two, as in the earlier collections, much of the material is completely fresh. These eight books are a veritable treasure of authentic folk tales, superbly translated and adapted for telling. Few of them are for children under eight or nine, but for imaginative older children these stories will prove an exciting discovery regardless of nationality. In the Russian collection the familiar "Sadko," "The Firebird" and "Baba Yaga" bear but slight likeness to the versions of those tales made familiar by Arthur Ransome. "The Lay of Prince Igor" in verse form is the least successful, but the "Heroic Poems" translated into prose, and the folk tale group are fascinating. They are colorful, humorous, in spite of their violence, and good to read or tell.

The Yugoslav tales are simpler and merrier throughout. They include some fresh and amusing fables and from the first story to the last there is not a dull one in the collection. A

The Fables of La Fontaine. Translated by Marie Ponsot. Illustrated by Simonne Baudoin. Grosset, 1957. \$1.95. (9—)

English-speaking children have not recently had a translation of the *Fontaine Fables* in metric form as the French children hear and learn them, and since Margaret Wise Brown's excellent prose translation is no longer available, only Aesop remains. It is a special pleasure to welcome this handsome edition of the *Fontaine Fables* translated into verse and beautifully illustrated in full color. Sometimes the morals are not self-evident, as in "The Grasshopper and the Ant"—"You sang then? Now, I say—go dance." But again they come off in lively style as the pithy advice with which "The Lion and the Rat" opens and closes—

Make friends with all the world and with
each one in it.

Salvation often comes from those we
least suspect
Of having virtues we may need and
must respect.

Time and patience get more done
Than force or furious emotion.

These fables are not for the youngest children, but actually, most fables, because of their double meanings, belong to the 9's or 10's and older. The richly colorful pictures add much to the satirical charm of these ancient bits of wisdom. A

Mike Fink, Snapping Turtle of the O-bi-o-o, Snag of the Massassip. By James Cloyd Bowman. Illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher. Little, Brown, 1957. \$3.00. (10—).

When you think how wonderful this story of Mike Fink would be to read aloud around a campfire, you can't wait for summer. Of all our gallery of tall tale heroes, Mike is the most appealing. He is more human than Paul Bunyan, not as rambunctious as Pecos Bill and gentler than John Henry or the others. But Mike Fink is fortunate in having an author who can make his supermen as convincing as the latest philanthropist who, indeed, they

often resemble. Mike was a seasoned woodsman when he decided to take to the river on a keelboat. His rifle Bang All had never failed him and was useful even from the deck of a keelboat where Mike proved himself the best shot in those parts. After that he took on such famous wrestlers as Micky Thunderbolt the Rattlesnake and a few others, with impressive results. Fink was no sooner owner of the keelboat, Light Foot, than he was determined to clean up the bullies and bandits of Cave-in Rock. It was child's play for Mike and a blessing to the river folk but the bandits' lies about him were harder to deal with. These and a



Mike Fink

bit of playfulness with Bang All caused trouble, but Fink would have come out all right if PROGRESS had not caught up with him in the form of steamboats. These were the first objects Mike Fink had ever found unbeatable. The miserable craft left him just where he started, a woodsman once more, with trusty Bang All in his hand and his spirits high. Not as sad a conclusion as John Henry's but melancholy!

A

The Witches' Ride and Other Tales From Costa Rica. Told and Illustrated by Lupe de Osma. Morrow, 1957. \$3.00. (8-12).

These twelve lively tales are well told, with beauty, humor and plenty of magic. Resemblances to European folktales are evident. "The Enchanted Monkey" is more childlike than "The White Cat." "The Fair One and the Dark Ugly One" is a "Cinderella" variant, "The Little House With Fritters in the Window" is less dramatic than "Hansel and Gretel" and other tales have many familiar elements common to traditional lore. The Bobo stories are the fresh-



The Witches Ride and Other Tales from Costa Rica

est and most amusing, especially the title story which will be fun to use at Halloween. "The Flower of Sweet Content" is as gentle and beautiful as its title implies, so the tragic climax and conclusion come as a shock. Yet children ten-years-old or more should be able to see the stern justice of both, namely, that gentle hearts must also use their wits and eventually evil will be punished. Storytellers will find delightful material in this collection.

A

Indian Tales of the Desert People. Adapted and Illustrated by William D. Hayes. McKay, 1957. \$3.00. (8-12).

"The Desert People" were the ancestors of the present Pima and Papago Indians of our Southwest. The author-artist explains that he has adapted these tales even to the introduction of such a term as "Great Spirit" which was foreign to the original. This seems too much of a cliché to have been necessary, but it is certainly not noticeable. Mr. Hayes is an excellent storyteller, and while the tales are not always logical they are invariably interesting and colorful. There is no continuity to the twelve selections. Stories of the creation, the flood and the first man are interspersed with such *pourquoi* tales as "Why Coyote Is the Color of the Ground," the origin of "The Turquoise Stones" and an unusual tale of two demi-gods, "Tobacco Woman and Corn Spirit." This is not an important collection but to the



Indian Tales of the Desert People

children of the Southwest, who know its mountains, deserts, its flowers, beasts and strange beauty, these twelve stories will make a strong appeal.

A

Social Studies

Indians

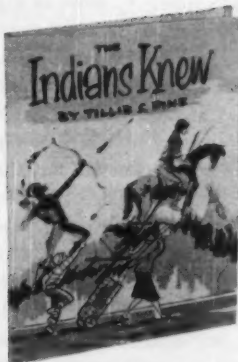
The Picture-Skin story. Written and illustrated by Alex W. Bealer III. Holiday House, 1957. \$2.00. (6-9)

The Indians Knew. By Tillie S. Pine. Illustrated by Ezra Jack Keats. Whittlesey House, 1957. \$2.00. (6-9)



The Picture-Skin Story

For primary grade Indian studies, two new titles with novel approaches are already proving most useful. *The Picture-Skin Story* tells of a Sioux warrior who as a small boy disobeyed his father and went buffalo hunting. Following a custom of his people, the warrior painted this memorable adventure in all its daring on a cowskin. Each page of the book has a five color illustration which shows the action of the text. The final double page shows the picture-skin with all the drawings, telling the story visually. Little Red Bird's tale is an excit-



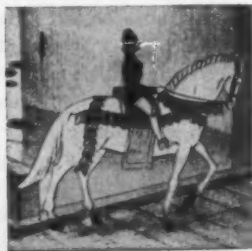
ing one and offers considerable background of the people. Both story and text have been checked for accuracy by John C. Ewars, author of *Plains Indian Painting*.

The Indians Knew describes scientific principles that Indians used even as they are used today and includes simple experiments for children. Shaping boats to ride through water, using travois to drag rather than carry heavy burdens, inserting feather "fins" on arrows to carry them through the air, and fertilizing the ground to grow better plants are some of the thirteen Indian practices related. The unusual approach gives younger children new insight into the intelligence of primitive peoples. Illustrated in black-and-white and color.

C

Christopher Goes to the Castle. Written and illustrated by Janice Holland. Scribner, 1957. \$2.75. (8-11).

Young Chris Chantry's arrival at the Duke



Christopher Goes to the Castle

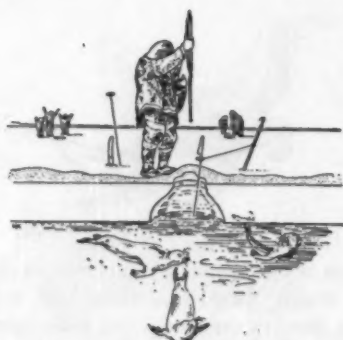
of Kentsford's Castle to serve as a page began under an ill omen, or so the superstitious servants feared. A brave deed on the jousting field in which Chris saved his master's life overcame the handicap and made for a happier future. This charming story of a medieval page offers a delightful supplement to the study of the Middle Ages and the life of the castle. Illustrations in color on nearly every page will give added appeal. There is an excellent "plan of a castle" on the first page of the book with each section carefully identified. C

"I Want To Be" Series. By Carla Greene. Illustrated in color and black-and-white. Children's Press. 1957. \$2.00 each. (6-8).

This easy to read series of "career" books offers an interesting variety of factual materials for children's own reading, in the first and second grades. It is useful as well for social studies topics. Current publications include: *I want to be a Teacher, . . . a Bus Driver, . . . a Nurse, . . . a Dairy Farmer, . . . a Fisherman, . . . a Pilot, . . . a Zoo Keeper and . . . a Coal Miner.* The latter three titles would have some additional use with older slow readers. Format is most attractive, with large print and colorful illustrations. C

Igloos, Yurts, and Totem Poles. Edited by Friedrich Boer. Illustrated by Lothar Walter and Hilda Koerner. Translated by Florence McHugh. Pantheon, 1957. \$3.50. (10-15)

Originally written in German and illustrated by staff members of the Hamburg Museum of Ethnology and Prehistory, this title offers fine information on the "life and customs of thirteen peoples around the globe." (subtitle). The studies are of primitive peoples of today, how they build their homes, obtain food and adapt generally to their particular locale. In each narrative, a boy or girl of the tribe describes the life of the people. Bushmen, Tuaregs, Jivaro Indians, Fuegians, Samoans and Eskimos are just a few of the groups included. There are fine drawings in black-and-white of



Igloos, Yurts, and Totem Poles

homes being built for each tribe, interior views, and many other scenes of customs and activities. Written for a somewhat younger age group than Gene Litzky's *Four Ways of Being Human*, this title is another excellent presentation of life among primitive peoples. C

The Fall of Constantinople. By Bernardine Kiely. Illustrated by Douglas Gorseline. Random House (Landmark Book), 1957. \$1.95 (11-15)

In 1452, Constantinople, the great Eastern stronghold of ancient culture and Christianity fell to the Ottoman Turks. Bernardine Kiely writes a stirring history of the fifty-three day siege which ended in the sack of the city and its re-establishment as a Moslem capitol. The heroic Constantine XI, last of the Roman emperors is vividly portrayed in his brave efforts to save the city though his army was hopelessly outnumbered, and his people too apathetic to support him. This historic event has not been fully treated before for younger readers, and the book is a distinctive contribution for that reason and for the vitality of its writing. Illustrated with pictures and many fine maps. C

Dictionaries

Thorndike Barnhart Advanced Junior Dictionary. By E. L. Thorndike and Clarence L. Barnhart. Doubleday. 1957. \$6.00. (12-15)

An excellent new dictionary geared to the junior high age has been published to serve children who have advanced beyond the *Junior Dictionary* and are not ready for the *High School Dictionary* in this same series. The book contains over 65,000 words, is generously illustrated with small pictures and maps, and uses many phrases with its definitions to clarify the

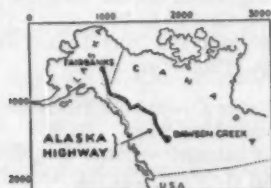
and clear, and the thumb-index aids in word location.

C

Colonial Living. Written and illustrated by Edwin Tunis. World Publishing Company, 1957. \$4.95. (10-adult).

Here is a remarkable contribution to ways of living in Colonial days which covers the period from 1564 to about 1770. The material is organized by centuries, and the first and briefest section describes the earliest settlements and how the people lived and worked. The seventeenth century covers three areas; New England, New Netherland and the Southern Colonies, giving detailed descriptions of homes, foods, crafts and industries, clothing, government, education, travel, etc. The eighteenth century material is organized under Pennsylvania and the Coastal Colonies. It is fascinating to observe during these centuries the manner in which American industry and culture grew, how homes and furniture reached greater peaks of comfort and beauty, and how living conditions improved generally. The book is illustrated with over 200 black-and-white drawings which are a visual contribution to an earlier way of life. Similar in format to the author's other titles, *Oars, Sails and Steam Weapons*, and *Wheels*, *Colonial Living* will be welcomed by teachers of the Colonial Period, whether in elementary grades or high school.

C



Alaska Highway, a highway that extends from Dawson Creek, British Columbia, Canada, to Fairbanks, Alaska.

Thorndike-Barnhart Advanced Junior Dictionary

meaning and application of words. Biographical, historical and geographical information is included in the one alphabetical listing and there is fine brief information on characters, places and events from mythological times to the present. A complete pronunciation key is located at the beginning and end of the book, and there are exercises on the use of the dictionary and aids for spelling. Print is large

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